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A BRAVE RESOLVE

or the
SIEGE OF STRALSUND











Captain Wyndham surprised by a visit from Helena.

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A BRAVE REGIMENT.

The Story of Stralund.

A STORY OF HEROISM AND ADVENTURE.

BY

J. B. DE LAFONT.

"The Regent of the Realm,"
"The Regent of the Realm,"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

SECOND EDITION.

HODDER AND STOUGHTON.

27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

LONDON.



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OR,

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moned, in the name of the Catholic League and of the Emperor of Germany, to admit an Imperial garrison. Unable to give an immediate reply, the city had asked for a respite of some days, in order that a question which presented on every side the gravest difficulties might be fully considered. If they opened their gates to Arnheim, Stralsund, one of the strongholds of the Lutherans, would fall a prey to the Emperor of Germany, the staunch friend of the Jesuits and the implacable enemy of Protestantism. Should they refuse, there lay before them all the horrors of a siege, the end of which it was impossible to foresee. The disposition of the Imperial forces was already too well known to leave much doubt about their determination, courage, and cruelty. The victories they had gained, and the towns they had taken and sacked, made the invincibility even of Stralsund, the strongest of the Hanse towns, a mere assumption.

Indeed, so thoroughly convinced were the inhabitants of their own inability to sustain a siege, that they would probably have made but little resistance if they had depended upon no one but

themselves. The danger, however, had threatened for months. The Imperial army had been in the neighbourhood and had subdued every town ; and the Stralsunders knew very well that when every other stronghold had been conquered their turn would be sure to come. Ambassadors had therefore been sent to the various Protestant powers. A Danish force had already arrived, with a promise of more help should it be required. The king of Sweden, too, while sending money and provisions, had besought the city, for the sake of the Protestant cause, to hold out to the very last ; and it was confidently expected that he would send a considerable force as soon as the war he was waging with Russia had been concluded.

The town council, therefore, thought itself justified in determining to close its gates and in refusing to listen to the summons ; but, as in so important a matter it was incumbent upon them fully to ascertain the popular spirit, they had convened on the market-place a meeting of all the inhabitants above the age of twenty-two ; and it is to that spacious square that the people were now crowding. We beg the reader to follow us to

one of the spires of the church of St. Nicholas and survey the scene.

The large square is densely packed, and every street leading to it is crowded ; the windows of every house are filled with spectators, and here and there a banner with the Stralsund arms is displayed. The people's faces, however, are all turned towards a square brick building opposite the church, and from that quarter the tones of a voice reach our ears. They proceed from a man who, surrounded by about a dozen others, stands on the flight of steps, gesticulating somewhat vehemently, and turning hither and thither to the crowd.

"Why" (such are the words that reach us) "do we find our fellow-creatures in other countries so oppressed and persecuted? Why do we hear of blood flowing incessantly, in countries where the unhappy people are not allowed to worship God after their conscience? I tell ye, burghers, it is because the people had not the courage to make a determined stand for their rights and their liberties; because they lacked unity; because they lacked faith; because they could not believe

that the same God who enabled David to slay the giant will help us to resist an enemy not half so dreadful." A burst of cheers here rose up from the people.

"When I look at that church," he continued, pointing to the structure opposite, "I thank God from the bottom of my heart that the pure Gospel, which that man of God the great Luther brought to light again, has been preached there now for nearly a century; and so, I hope, do you. But if you would rather have it converted into a Popish church, if you prefer a city full of priests and Jesuits, at whose appearance your only hope of liberty will fly, then admit Arnheim and his Imperial garrison at once. Now is the time, burghers, to give a noble example of that disinterestedness, that courage, which prompts a Christian to part with all he esteems most valuable on earth, rather than lose his liberty of religion and his honour before God and man. Now is the time to show that you love your creed, not only in prosperity but in adversity. Our town is strong, our burghers are stout and valiant men, the kings of Sweden

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and Denmark have both promised us assistance in men and money ; but our greatest strength lies in yonder house of prayer, for we know that the help we get there is a match for a hundred Arnheims and Wallensteins."

The speaker, who occupied the post of syndic to the town, sat down amidst the enthusiastic cheering of the people. His animated words had produced upon the multitude an impression which was very welcome to the council. When he had taken his seat amongst them, the burgo-master, Andrea Wurzhheim, rose immediately, and, as he raised his hand, there fell upon the people a profound silence. The town-clerk with impressive voice then read the points upon which the council had come to a decision. They were as follows :—

1st. To abide faithfully, under the present dangerous circumstances, by the true religion as expressed in the Augsburg (*i.e.* Lutheran) Confession ; to contend for it and for the common liberty, and for the privileges and welfare of the town ; and to stake life and fortune in their defence.

2nd. To continue faithful to the Holy Roman Empire ; but at the same time,—

3rd. Not to suffer any foreign garrison to enter the town, no matter who should require it.

4th. To give due honour to the honourable council, as being the power ordained by God.

5th. To obey the appointed chiefs and officers.

6th. To remain faithfully at the appointed post ; to abstain from unnecessary firing, and from carousing at the watches.

7th. To behave as peaceful neighbours towards one's fellow-burghers ; to avoid all factiousness, quarrels, and disorder ; and, in case of disputes, not to permit an affray to ensue at the watches or barracks, but to bring the matter before the legal judges.

These points were submitted to the assembly to be confirmed by a solemn oath. The clerk read them thrice with a loud voice, and each time the hearty cheers of the people assured him of their unanimous consent.

The town council was already congratulating itself upon the unexpected issue of the meeting. The cheering had gradually given way to a deep

silence, as every one felt the importance of the moment, when a man ascended the steps whose appearance mightily affected the crowd. As if seized by an irresistible impulse, it swayed to and fro like a corn-field agitated by the wind, hands were shaken in a threatening manner, and instead of the solemn silence the air was filled with hisses, and cries of "No, no! No Calvinist! No Heidelberg! They are worse than Papists."

And who, then, was this Calvinist, this Heidelberg, this worse than Papist? He was an elderly man, of venerable appearance,—such as the old painters loved to take as models for the apostles,—in clerical dress, with a fire in his fine eyes that belied the wrinkles in his face and the greyness of his beard, and with a youthful eagerness in his gestures as he motioned the people to be silent and hear his words. Pastor Hermann, the minister of the small Reformed church in the town, was as zealous an antagonist of the Lutheran as of the Catholic doctrines, and his efforts to obtain a hearing would probably have proved fruitless had not the burgo-master come to his aid.

"Children," he said, "what conduct is this? What a commencement of our endeavours to avoid all factiousness and quarrels! Would ye refuse to Pastor Hermann, as good a citizen as the best of us, a right ye claim for yourselves? Have ye forgotten how at the time of the epidemic he nearly lost his life in visiting the sick? Did any of you refuse to hear him then? For shame, children!"

There was a mixture of applause and murmur, but though the latter was far the stronger, silence reigned at last, and the clear deep voice of the Reformed pastor sounded across the square.

"Burghers! I have listened to the propositions just read, and I subscribe to them and will swear to them with all my heart. But I feel it my duty solemnly to protest against the first. I deny that the true religion is expressed in the Augsburg Confession."

A great tumult here interrupted the bold if not reckless speaker. "Down with the heretic!" "Out of the town with him!" "Burn him!" Such were the cries that met him. And some of the more turbulent, trying to push forward,

would perhaps have attacked the imprudent man, had not a body of armed constables interposed and restored order.

One of the councillors now rose. It was the recorder, Johann Knittel, a red-faced man, apparently of a nervous constitution.

"I have always esteemed our pastor Hermann highly, though he has false views upon religion," he said; "but I have also greatly deplored his fanatic zeal. I am sorry he has not yet unlearned the lessons of his teacher, the famous professor, Abraham Scultetus,* who said that he would rather marry his daughter to a Turk than to a Lutheran. I say——"

"And what did your friend the court chaplain, Matthias Hoe von Hoënegg, say?" shouted the pastor indignantly. "Did he not say that he would rather leave Bohemia in the hands of the Jesuits than deliver it into the clutches of Calvin, by giving it a Reformed king?"

* Abraham Scultetus, or rather Shultet, an eminent Calvinist, to whom these words have been ascribed. They give an idea of the spirit of faction of those days, 1566-1625.

"And he was right too!" cried several persons from below.

"He was not!" cried a Calvinist in the crowd, taking courage to support his pastor. "If there were no more difference between us and the Papist than there is between you and——"

The tumult now became so uproarious, and assumed so threatening an aspect, that the terrified council, not prepared for such a reception of its peaceful propositions, was at a loss what to do. It was to be feared that words would lead to blows, and that the few adherents of Calvin who had appeared on the square would fare badly in a fray with their numerous and hot-headed antagonists. At this moment a man appeared on the scene who was hailed alike by the people and the council with hearty cheers. It was Herr Wechter, one of the magistrates, and one of the wealthiest citizens of Stralsund. And he was about the only man who at this moment could have come forward to soothe both parties without incurring the hatred or displeasure of at least one of them. Father Wechter, as he was called, was a thorough Calvinist, and never had there been one moment in his

life in which he had not openly acknowledged his adherence to that form of faith. But his amiable disposition, his benevolence, his upright dealing, his sympathy with the poor, made him the most popular man in the city. Where others were sneered at, he was listened to with respect, or at least without insult, and so great was his personal influence that his appearance among the magistrates was a sign for immediate silence.

"Silence! Let us hear what Father Wechter has to say! He is always right, somehow!" were the ejaculations from the crowd; and in a few moments he was able to make his voice heard to the farthest end of the square.

"Children," he said, "I am grieved to find that on such an occasion as this there should be such unseemly behaviour. I have lived for thirty years in this city; there are but few faces that I do not know, and I could not count all the big men whom I have kissed when they were babes. But had I known that they would have conducted themselves thus, I would have been ashamed to——"

A good-humoured laugh ran through the crowd, and assured him that he had gained his point.



Herr Wechter calms the tumult of the people.

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"Is this, citizens," he said, "the talk and the conduct of wise men? Is this the time and place for theological controversies? I thought we had assembled here to agree upon mutual measures of defence, but I fear that our greatest enemy lies in our midst, for assuredly a city divided against itself shall not stand. The town is in great danger, the Imperial generals are powerful and unsparing, and if we do not love each other in brotherly unity, the Lord God shall surely deliver us into their hands. You know, all of you, that I am a Reformed Christian, but I hope you also know that I love the Lutheran Christians as my brethren. I cannot give my adherence to the Augsburg Confession as an expression of my personal belief. But this is *not* required in the first of the seven points now before us. We Calvinists have simply to choose which of the two, the Augsburg or the Popish Confession, we will in the present perilous circumstances defend. And in this alternative I do not for one moment hesitate to choose the former. The Augsburg Confession, whatever it may or may not be in other respects, is a Protestant Confession. Luther was a Pro-

testant, nay, the father of all Protestantism. Were the choice between Luther and Calvin, I would prefer the latter; but as it is Luther or the Pope, I say Luther, and say it with all my heart. (Loud cheering of both parties, as each deemed its own side victorious.) If it be understood that my oath does not imply any personal adherence to the Augsburg Confession as a perfect expression of my faith, I will take it immediately and with all my heart."

An outburst of enthusiasm greeted this firm and conciliatory speech. When it had subsided, the burgomaster proposed in the name of the council that the reserve desired by Herr Wechter should be added as a clause to the seven points. The oath was then unanimously taken, and the burghers returned home as peacefully as if no disturbance had ever reigned in their midst. But amongst those who took the oath Pastor Hermann was not to be found.

Walking slowly in the direction of his house, Herr Wechter came up with him at the turn of a street. As he put his arm into that of the preacher, the latter gazed at him for a moment

with an air of reproach, and shaking his head, said in a somewhat stern voice, "And is this proclaiming your faith boldly, Herr Wechter?"

"My dear friend," answered Herr Wechter, pressing his hand and feigning astonishment, "are you not content with what I have said?"

"How can I be?" said the pastor. "You did nothing less than approve of the Augsburg Confession—a work of the devil.

"Nay," said Wechter, reproachingly, "it is not a work of the devil, but of holy, though imperfect men. I did not say that I approved of it, but that I preferred it a thousand times to the Roman doctrines. And do not you?"

"Well, yes," answered the other, after a moment's pause; "but still you should have denounced it. Never was there a better opportunity to show all its imperfections and faults."

"Nay, never was there a better opportunity to remember that it is written, 'The greatest of these is charity.' There are no Lutherans or Calvinists in heaven, and if there must be on earth, let us, at any rate, not hate each other."

CHAPTER II.

THE CONDITION OF GERMANY.

THE resolutions thus taken by the people of Stralsund were carried out. A refusal was sent to Arnheim. The town was put in a state of siege ; its gates were closed, its citizens were armed, and every preparation made for executing their bold and noble plans. On the other hand, the Imperial general immediately settled down before it. Trenches and breastworks began to surround the city, and the thunder of a hundred pieces of artillery shook the foundations of the church of St. Nicholas. It will not be out of place here to relate some of the circumstances which gave rise to this state of affairs.

The arms of the Emperor Ferdinand II. and of the Catholic League had been for some time victorious in Germany. Bohemia, the first scene of the war, was once more entirely in their hands. The newly-elected king, whose forces had been defeated in a battle before the walls of Prague while

he was banqueting within, had fled to his father-in-law, James I. of England. His principal general, Mathias Count Thurn, after having marched to Vienna and back without effecting anything but the ruin of his army, had crossed over to Sweden. The two adventurers, Count Mansfeldt and the Duke of Brunswick, whose armies of volunteers and outlaws subsisted entirely upon the spoil of the territories in which they happened to be, for some time successfully opposed Tilly. But want of money and the inevitable destitution which they spread around them, and from which Tilly would not allow them to escape, forced them to disband their troops and seek a shelter in the Netherlands. The ex-king of Bohemia, who had hoped to be able to save at least that part of the dominion which he had inherited as elector-palatine, found himself deprived even of his Palatinate, and saw the Duke of Bavaria solemnly invested with his forfeited rights.

The Protestant princes, who had remained inactive, became seriously alarmed at the turn events had taken. The Protestant Union possessed no firm and acknowledged head ; its mem-

bers, mistrustful of each other and ambitious for themselves, had allowed the time to slip by without taking any active measures. But when they saw the elector-palatine's army defeated, the forces of Mansfeldt and Brunswick disbanded, when, nevertheless, Tilly's army remained in the field and the Emperor assumed each day a more independent tone, it occurred to them that their territories might follow the Palatinate, unless they averted the danger. An alliance was therefore formed for mutual protection.

Christian, King of Denmark, belonged to the Union as Duke of Holstein. Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, was induced to join ; James I. of England promised his assistance ; subsidies were negotiated for in the Netherlands, in France, and in some of the Italian republics, and the princes of the circle of Lower Saxony exerted all their powers to raise an army of their own. It was at the same time officially declared in Vienna that these preparations were made with no view to hostile aggression, but simply as a means of defence, and that the princes of the Union were as loyal as ever. The Emperor, in answer to this

declaration, required them to give proof of this loyalty by laying down their arms. Instead of this, the princes redoubled their efforts, and were soon in a position to defy the Emperor.

The ambitious King of Denmark, wishing to be the head of the armed Union, and to gain for himself the military renown to which he aspired, entered Germany with an army of 60,000 men. At this welcome renewal of hostilities Count Mansfeldt and the Duke of Brunswick left their retreat in the Netherlands, once more assembled a band of adventurers around them, and recommenced their old practices of fishing in troubled waters. For what was more probable than that they should have gathered a good harvest in the exceedingly troubled waters of Germany, had affairs gone exactly as they calculated? They expected, and not without some show of reason, that help, either in the shape of money or of men, would be sent from Sweden, from England, and from the Netherlands. They were confident that Richelieu would send a French army into Alsace, and would rouse the Italian States that were dependent on Austria, so that on the south and

west of Europe her arms would be fully engaged. They themselves would then, in conjunction with others, be opposed to the single forces of Count Tilly; the defeat of Austria on all sides would be inevitable; the rich territories of the League would lie entirely undefended; and what was to prevent them marching to Vienna itself?

Nothing but the fickleness of human promises and calculations. Sweden, conducting an advantageous war with Poland and Russia, was not inclined to accept a secondary position. It stood aloof and awaited the result of Denmark's expedition. The Netherlands found that they had as much as they could manage in defending themselves against Spain and retaining the provinces they had wrested from her. England sent a small contribution in money and many promises. France remained for a moment inactive. The Italian States prudently postponed their rising, and allowed the Imperial cabinet of Vienna to turn its attention entirely to the affairs of the Union. And, to crown all, instead of finding themselves opposed by one, the counts found that they had to deal with two formid-

able armies, one of which was constructed on the same principle as their own and headed by a more brilliant general.

The Duke of Waldstein, or Wallenstein, a Colonel of hussars in the army of the League, whose possessions in Hungary gave him the enjoyments of a princely fortune, saw that it was galling to the Emperor to be obliged to leave the defence of his empire to the army of Bavaria. Wallenstein's name was already known by his brilliant exploits against the Turks; and his extraordinary daring, coupled with a liberality which no one but himself could afford, made him the idol of his regiment.

When therefore he proposed to raise and maintain an army at his own expense, and use it solely in the Emperor's service, provided he were invested with the title of generalissimo, his offer, eccentric and impossible though it looked, was accepted. In less than three months the impossible had been done. Wallenstein was at the head of an army of 30,000 men. Tilly commanded a somewhat larger force, and the Union had to fight its way to peace as best it could.

In the two years which now elapsed, from the beginning of 1626 to 1628, after a series of skirmishes, battles, marches, and counter-marches, Wallenstein and Tilly were completely victorious. Mansfeldt, finding the waters somewhat too troubled for him, marched with his army right across Germany into Hungary, where, finding no employment for his troops, he was compelled to disband them. He then travelled on towards Venice, but died, before arriving there, a melancholy and solitary death. The Duke of Brunswick soon followed him to the grave.

The King of Denmark, although endowed with great personal courage, was equally unfortunate. Opposed to two such experienced generals, he was defeated at every point. His army, seriously diminished in number, drew back into Holstein, and was pursued by Wallenstein. The princes of the Union, abandoned to their own resources, were compelled to make peace at any price. Brandenburg, Holstein, and Mecklenburg, which latter the Duke of Wallenstein had received from the Emperor for his pains, were

overrun by his army, and the towns forced to receive Imperial garrisons and acknowledge the right of the Duke of Bavaria to the Palatinate.

It was at this moment, in the beginning of 1628, that Stralsund resolved to close its gates and refuse to admit the Imperial garrison. Previous to the scene described in our opening chapter, Arnheim had quietly taken possession of the little island of Danholm, which lay immediately in front of the town at the distance of about a mile, and from which, had he been able to keep it, the town might have been brought to terms in a few days. A sharp contest in the dead of night had resulted in his being driven from the island; and the Danish ships, which had brought over four companies of soldiers, had destroyed every boat and craft, by means of which the attempt might have been renewed.

As soon as Arnheim received the refusal, he established his batteries opposite two of the three principal gates of the city. Stralsund presented the appearance of an irregular isosceles triangle, with its base resting upon the Baltic.

At each of the angles there was a strong gate, with a bridge across the immense ditch. The two gates at the sea-side, of which the eastern was called the Franken Thor, and the western the Knipes Thor, did not communicate immediately with the town, but opened upon the broad and spacious quay. This quay, however, was divided from the town by a high and well-defended wall, in which six heavy iron doors gave access to as many streets. These being closed, even if the two gates were taken and the quay in the enemy's hands, the town was not by any means hopelessly lost.

During the month of May the siege was carried on with great vigour. Twice the Knipes and Franken Thors had been stormed; but the courage and determination of the citizens had averted the danger. One Sunday morning, while the greater part of the inhabitants were in the churches, a woman, who happened to be on the outer wall, saw what looked to her like preparations for attack. Giving herself but little time to verify her observation, she ran to the neighbouring guard-house, where no one was

conscious of the approaching danger. Seizing a drum, she flung it round her neck and ran through the town beating the alarm. In a few moments the garrison poured out of the churches and to the walls, where the Imperial troops had already gained some advantage. For some hours that Sunday morning the fate of the town was despaired of; but when the sun declined in his course the besiegers were once more defeated, and one outpost was all they gained by the loss of several hundred men. This happened on the 2nd of June.

The citizens, however, foresaw that it would be useless to continue the resistance unless some help arrived from without. That same Sunday afternoon it was resolved to send an embassy to Wallenstein, whose principal army lay at the time in the environs of Frankfort, and learn on what terms he could be induced to raise the siege. Curiously enough, a few hours after the ship with the embassy had sailed, four companies of Danes and two of Swedes and Scots arrived in the town, bringing with them a considerable quantity of ammu-

nition and provisions. It was then unanimously resolved to continue the siege, unless Wallenstein should make such terms as could be accepted by the town without dishonour. The deputation, however, soon returned with the news that Wallenstein had made worse terms than before,—had threatened them with terrible vengeance, and had sworn that were the town tied to heaven with iron chains he would tear it away and make it his.

On the 16th of June the siege was renewed with vigour. On the 18th, Wallenstein himself suddenly broke up his camp, and passed Frankfort on his way to Stralsund. On the 30th, another Swedish reinforcement entered the city, not, however, without having to sustain a severe cannonade from the Imperial coast batteries. On the 1st of July the sun rose gloriously over the city, and promised a magnificent day. And now we request our readers to follow us to a small house in the city, round which for a time our attention must circle.

CHAPTER III.

CROSS PURPOSES.

THE weather was beautiful. Under a cloudless sky and a bright sun, a cool delicious sea-breeze wafted perfume through the air. It was noon by the clock of St. Nicholas Church, for the sound of its chimes had trembled over Stralsund not many minutes ago. The city lay under the glare of the sun as passively as did the blue waters of the Baltic, with barely enough motion to show that it was still alive. Where was the fierce activity that had stirred its inmost core so lately? Where was the ceaseless roll of the cannon, the pungent smell of powder, the hurrying to and fro? It seemed as if a plague had visited the enemy's lines, for not a soul was visible; not a helmet, not a feather gave the watchful and suspicious garrison the chance of a shot. Treacherous calm!

Yet, as long as it lasted, the garrison was thankful to somewhat relax its vigilance.

The soldiers, not knowing whether it might not be their last meal, regaled themselves with such simple fare as the already straitened means of the city could afford. The burgher went home to his wife to impart the hope that perhaps the Imperial leaders had thought better of it, and were abandoning the siege. It was impossible in the glorious summer weather not to feel hope creeping into the heart; it would have been more than human to resist the sense of happiness which rest and peaceful quiet conveyed to the anxious mind.

And in the garden at the back of a small house in the Franken-Strasse, in the shadow of a spreading chestnut-tree, a little group presented a striking resemblance to the state of affairs in the city. From afar it looked like the personification of peace. A maiden was seated on a wooden form, and bent her head gracefully over the work in her hand; a youth, dressed in the uniform of the burgher guard, reclined on the grass at her feet and murmured to her in a low voice, and in that broken, incoherent manner that seems to belong to the spontaneous utterings of the heart. But step

closer, and look into that face. Are there not the marks of dark, violent, ungovernable passion? What means the clenching of that fist, the sudden lifting of the eye, the throwing back of the head, and the proud, defiant smile that accompany his words?

The girl knew them, and understood their meaning better than his words. For she had studied him almost since they were betrothed as children, and even as a girl she had seldom been at a loss to discover her playmate's inmost mood. And now, while her eyes travelled from her handiwork to his face, they were filled with a stealthy tear, and a look of deep pity came over her beautiful features.

"Indeed, Theodore," said she, "the mistrust and jealousy is all on your own side. Your father has no wish,—has no idea of suspecting you, I feel sure of that."

The youth laughed. It was a short, hard laugh, with but little merriment; and he answered in a low voice, as though he were afraid to give full vent to his speech: "You are right, Helena, he no longer suspects me. He has already

judged, and he surrounds me with spies. But let him; 'twill not be for long."

The girl's cheeks flushed.

"You wrong him cruelly, ignobly. Could *he* set men to watch you and report your doings? Could he be afraid of your spending money if it affords pleasure to the son whom he so dearly loves? Oh, fie, Theodore!"

The youth glanced up into her face, — so lovely, so sad, and so reproachful; but as if to harden himself against that influence, his look became gloomier than ever.

"I expected this," he said; "but I did not expect it so soon. I knew that at some time or other you would become one of my enemies, like all the rest around me. But I had hoped that you at least would tarry somewhat, and try to convince yourself that he stints me in everything; that, under the pretence of giving me good advice, he humbles me daily, because he knows that he can make me listen, and keeps me away, or tries to separate me, from those companions of my age who are, at least, not wholly selfish. But no matter; it must have come sooner or later."

His voice, hard at all times, had become doubly hard. His cheeks had flushed with indignation, and the young face that might have been radiant with hope and love and loyal ambition, was dark and worn, as though it looked back upon a finished life through years of disappointment.

Helena had listened with suspended breath, and trembled at those words.

"Oh, my friend," she said, laying her hand lightly upon his shoulder, "do you know where this will end? It is too fearful to believe," and she burst out in tears. "Oh! God will surely, surely punish you for this. Pray, Theodore, pray that He may forgive you, and throw yourself into your father's arms to-night."

"He would bid me to be gone," said Theodore, "or chide me for being a fool. But this seems to touch you strangely. Do you then love him so?"

"You know right well that there is no one in Stralsund for whom I feel so great an affection."

"Indeed! You do not even except your own father?"

"Scarcely. And," she added, in a soft tone, "will *he* not be my father soon?"

"I doubt it," answered Theodore, doggedly ;
"at least——" He paused hesitatingly.

"At least—what would you say?" asked Helena, bending over him with compassion.

"At least," he pursued, sternly, "if your own wishes alone were consulted, as they shall be."

A look of pain passed over Helena's countenance, but she put her hand gently before her lover's lips, and said quietly, "Hush! hush! You would almost make me think you spoke in earnest."

"Nay, then," answered he, "I do speak in earnest. I am not given to that light-hearted folly and jest to which your guests have accustomed your ear. I mean it, and I say once more, that if your wishes alone are consulted you will have an English father-in-law instead of a Stralsunder. And I care not how you deny it, for your blushes and your looks tell their own tale."

Her blushes and her looks told something, beyond doubt. Did they acknowledge the truth of his words, or had they been summoned by indignation? Or was it sorrow at witnessing another sign of that dreadful and suspicious temperament?

It could scarcely be that, for drawing away the hand which, by a better impulse, he had seized, she said, in a tremulous tone,—

“What right have you to say those words? If you have no other conversation for me, why do you not return to your duty on the walls, and leave me at least unmolested?”

“And leave you to my rivals,” said Theodore bitterly. “My future wife asks me why I come to visit her for one short hour out of the twenty-four. Unreasonable conduct! To fly from the well-defended walls of a strong city no longer in danger to defend a fortress surrounded by enemies of which the garrison——”

“Silence!” said Helena, with heightened colour and flashing eyes. “I have promised to be your wife, and I will keep my promise. But say not another word about this foolish suspicion. I have never given you the least ground for it, and you have no right to insult me. It is enough that we are compelled to entertain them as our guests, and have their unwelcome presence forced upon us; but you, who should help and aid me in this circumstance, need not aggravate it by your

cruel words? *He*, I am sure, would not have done it."

Her colour was gone, her eye was dimmed with tears, her voice was lost in a sob, and Theodore, who had risen, felt exceedingly guilty, as he was. And yet it was a most unfortunate speech. For he had mentioned no name, he had fastened his suspicions upon no one; but the stress which Helena laid upon the pronoun showed that, in her mind, at least, there was some one more prominent than the rest. Some thought like this flashed across the young man's brain, and as he realized it he started,—he seized her hand almost rudely, and said: "It is true, then! There *is* a he!"

He waited long and earnestly for an answer. But when she spoke not, as though she were too much hurt to reply, her lover interpreted the silence in his own way.

"It is true, then," he said slowly, "that even you turn away from me? You, from whom I thought I had a right to expect sympathy—from whom I had hoped to gain some love! You too have forsaken me for a stranger,—an intruder. Hark you, Helena!"—he leaned forward and

spoke through his set teeth,—“I know not which of them it is, but I can guess. At any rate, I can learn, and know it I shall. And then”—he threw her little hand away and clenched his own—“and then let me find him, let me meet him alone, out of your sight, and——”

The muttered threat would have had no great effect upon Helena, had she not known the character of her betrothed. She trembled, and seized his hand. At this moment a voice proceeded from the house which arrested the words on her lips, and the influence of her gentle persuasion was counteracted by an unfortunate sentence in broken German, spoken in jest, but heard in earnest.

“Aha!”—thus spoke a man’s voice from the garden door—“we have, then, at last trapped the fox. What fools we were to hunt him in every spot where he was not, and forget the prize that draws him hither. Good morrow, *fräulein*! I have come to drag away your cavalier.”

So saying, a young man, dressed in the uniform of an officer of the Scottish regiment in Swedish service, stepped out of the house and advanced

towards the pair. His manner was free and easy, and his homely and good-natured face betrayed not by as much as a line the consciousness that he was interrupting a delicate quarrel. The fox, on the contrary, who had just heard that he was trapped, eyed the speaker coldly from head to foot, and turning with a slight smile towards his betrothed, muttered softly: "What did I tell you? Here is one of the hunters, by his own confession."

Helena did as if she had not heard this speech, and greeted the new comer with a frank and charming smile.

"Are you so determined a hunter, Herr Baverley," she said, "that you must needs pursue a friend, when foes have fled beyond your reach?"

"Well, fair lady, I confess I like something to do, especially when it is so pleasing a commission as the driving away of a lover, who, as you well know, is my deadly rival."

The maid smiled at this innocent piece of jesting, for nothing seemed further from his mind than to be a rival. The admiration expressed in his looks and words was too frank and open.

And so her lover seemed to think; for after having narrowly watched both, his look became calm, and he said, in a cold voice,—“I fear no rivals; for by the unchangeable rules of right and virtue, my cause must triumph over yours, even without my interference.”

“Nay,” answered the other, laughing easily, “I fear your cause cannot triumph over all your rivals, since every officer in our regiment, and I trow every one in yours, aspires to that position.”

He made a gallant bow, but observing that the conversation did not please her, he addressed himself to the young burgher, began to explain how, meeting old Herr Wechter, his father, who was on duty at the Tribsee Thor, he had been enjoined, if he met his son, to send him on. Theodore listened in silence, and eyed the speaker with ill-concealed scorn; but while the latter was yet speaking he became conscious of some one's approach by the manner in which young Wechter's look darkened and became fixed upon some object behind him. He turned round, and exclaimed in English: “What now, Wynd-

ham? What brings you here? Has Wallenstein come?"

Wyndham approached his fair hostess with a bow, perhaps a trifle too ceremonious, and extended his hand to her lover. There was about him something so winning—so thoroughly chivalrous—that Theodore took the offered hand without hesitation, but also without warmth. He returned the greeting coolly, and threw a look full of meaning at Helena. The maid trembled imperceptibly, but not the faintest blush overspread her cheeks. None but the closest observer would have discovered a change in her; but jealousy, than which no observer is more acute, divined her resolution to remain easy, and betray by no outward sign the wild beating of her heart. Jealousy wanted no more than this.

"I have to congratulate you, Herr Lieutenant, on your promotion," said the last-arrived, in perfect German. "If this be an earnest of your success at arms, I fear not but your career will be glorious."

"Ah me!" exclaimed his friend, in his broken language, "thus goes it with us foreigners. We

are at it for years and come to nothing ; and you—you seize the sword for two, three months, and lo, you jump at posts and dignities like a bull at a haystack."

"You forget, sir, that but now I was, in your own words, a hunted fox," answered Theodore, sternly, almost fiercely ; and turning to Helena, he whispered, "I know now. Remember what I said, and have a care." And with a haughty nod to both young men he strode towards the house and disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ADVENTURE ON THE DANHÖLM.

THIS abrupt departure, and the words Theodore had uttered, but most of all the look which accompanied them, left the three youthful persons gazing at each other with some feelings of embarrassment and confusion. An uneasy silence, which became each moment more oppressive, seemed to have fettered their tongues, until at last Lieutenant Bayerley recollected that it was he who had uttered the words about the hunted fox, and said in a tone of regret,—

“I should be extremely grieved, fairest lady, if aught I had said were to have wounded the feelings of Herr Wechter. I earnestly hope that you will convey him my apologies, should you meet him ere I do.”

“I do not think that any excuses are needed, Herr Lieutenant, where no offence was given. Theodore repeated your words in no spirit of anger, and his tone and looks referred entirely

to something that"—she hesitated—"that had passed between us before you came."

"Then I warrant that that something was of a gloomy and unpleasant nature," said honest Baverley, who was too dull at times to perceive that he was treading on dangerous ground; "and if I were a lady's lover——"

He was interrupted by his friend, who started impatiently, and said, in a tone, half-jest, half-earnest: "My dear William, ere you can fill so delicate a post, you want a deal of schooling, methinks."

"Nay, on the contrary," said Helena, with a sweet smile, but always addressing Baverley, "I think the captain too severe in his judgment. You would make an admirable cavalier, and should the enemy prove too strong for us, and enter the town, I hope that I may have no worse protection than your sword."

Baverley's face beamed with pleasure, but catching a look of disappointment on his friend's face, it struck him that he had received more than his fair share of the lady's favour, and attempted to rectify matters after his own fashion.

"My sword, Mistress Helena," he said, "will always be at your service. But in that hour of need which you spoke of, and which we devoutly hope may never come, I feel assured that there will be other swords, long before mine can be unsheathed—swords and arms too—that would count it an honour to be broken in your protection. Such swords, for instance," he added, by way of further explanation, "as my friend Harry's. Why, madam, he told me only the other day in strict confidence——"

"Nay, then," she said, smiling, though somewhat sadly, "if it were told you in such strict confidence, I will not hear it of you, for I would not have you break your trust. But how is it that we find Captain Wyndham here at the hour of noon, when he is supposed to be on duty?"

"I have come to exchange my helmet for a felt hat," answered Wyndham, "for surely the heat is almost unbearable. I also have a request to you, fair fräulein. It is a request for your advice, and yours too, Willam. I have this day met with an adventure which puzzles me, and in the following of which I dare not trust

myself to act without some guidance. For I have my misgivings whether what I have done be not a breach of duty, and whether what I would do is not more pernicious than beneficial in its possible consequences. But listen." He seated himself on the wooden bench by her side, unbuckled his sword, and laid it on the grass at his feet. "Early this morning I was sent for by Colonel Holk, who, as you know, is at present commander of the city. I found him and one of the burgomasters, Kranthoff, in earnest conversation about the Danholm. One of the sentries had reported that at early dawn he had distinctly heard, and, he thinks, seen, persons rowing from the enemy's camp to the island. He was positive he heard the splashing of the water, but whether that was occasioned by rowing or swimming he cannot say. At any rate, the colonel was extremely anxious to ascertain whether the enemy had broken their agreement and taken possession of the island, as in that case we should have had to dislodge them at any cost. They commissioned me to row across with twenty picked musketeers. I had soon chosen my men, and was rowing

towards the island, followed by the other boat, for we filled two boats, when a shower of shot and bullets from the Imperial battery at the Franken Thor obliged us to kneel and lie down in the bottom of the boat. As soon as we were out of their reach, we resumed our seats; but as we were bending down I happened to look towards the Danhölme, and distinctly perceived the figure of a man standing on that perpendicular piece of rock that almost rises out of the sea. He looked not like a soldier, and ere I could bring my telescope to my eye and examine the place, the figure was gone. Not knowing what conclusion to draw from this apparition, I resolved to land on the other side, where the beach is better suited for that purpose, since a few men on this side of the island might easily have repelled our attempt. But when we landed, and explored the island, we found no trace of any human being having visited the island since it was evacuated by us. Not content with this result, however, I resolved to climb to the top of the rock, and satisfy myself that no person was hidden there. I had interrogated every one of

my men, but no one had seen anything, and I myself was now inclined to believe that what I had seen was a mere hallucination. I soon reached the summit of the rock, which presents a most striking view of Stralsund and the Imperial camp. Our respective positions were as clearly shown as though they were drawn on a map, and I have already advised the colonel to establish a little fortress there, from which, by the aid of signs, observations of the enemy's movements can be made. But that has nothing to do with my adventure.

"The top of the rock is covered with low copse-wood, reaching, I should say, to my knee; and as I was yet beating it aside to ascertain whether it might perchance hide some lurking enemy, I fancied I saw a cleft or crevice in the rock behind me. I was right. Beating away the branches of the trees that seem to grow out of the side of the rock farthest away from the city, I saw before me a cleft some six feet wide and about six feet deep. It ended narrowly towards the island, and was covered at the bottom with dry leaves, and what looked to me very much like rags. With

a sudden impulse, and forgetting that I could not be seen by any of my men, for I was hidden by those very trees that covered the crevice, I jumped into the opening, and alighted on very soft ground. But, to my utter amazement, I was immediately seized round the body from behind, and held as in a vice, while a voice whispered in German, "If you utter a sound you are a dead man!"

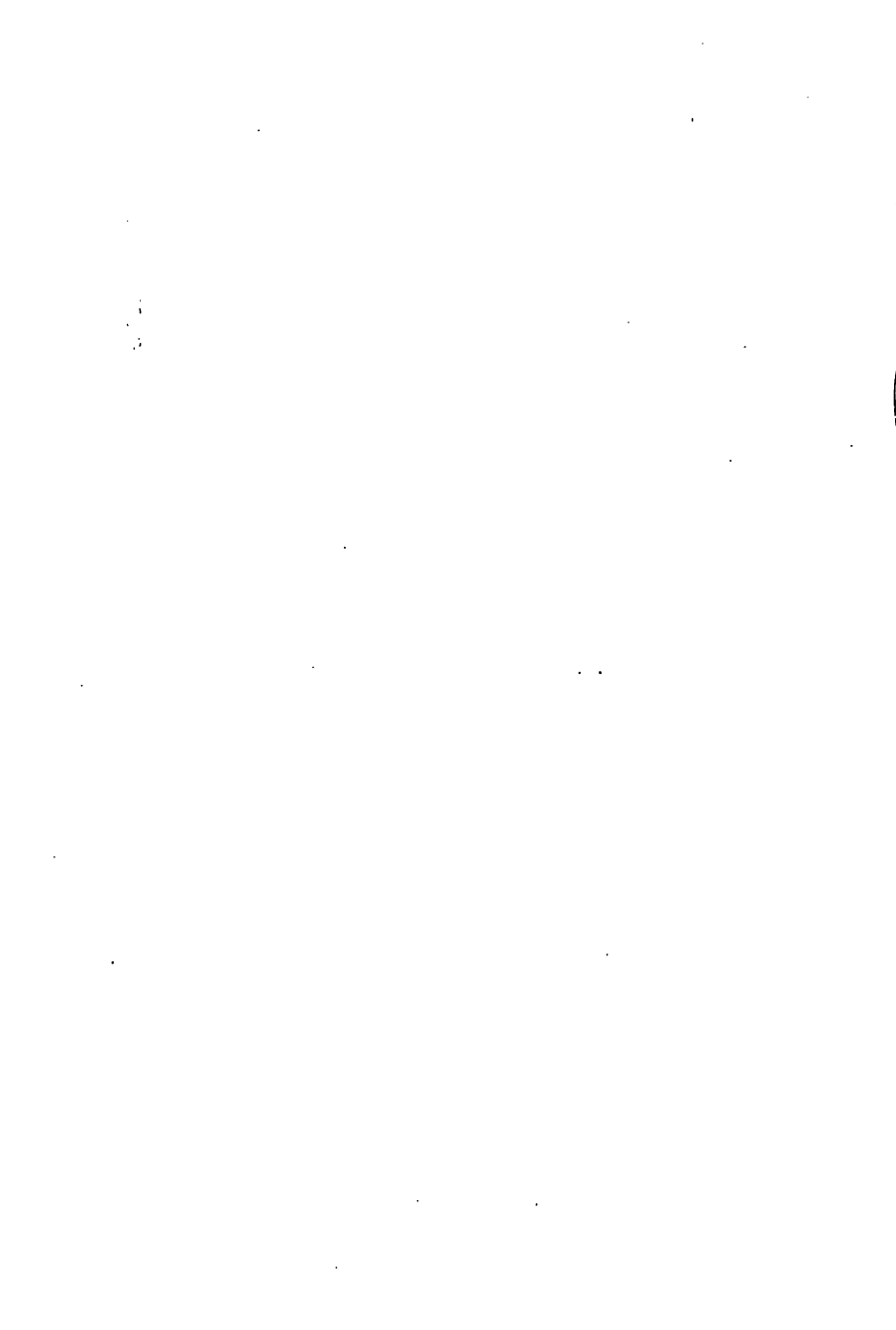
The young captain paused, for he observed in the female part of his audience secret signs of alarm. His German, unlike that of his friend, was fluent and with little accent; his manner of relation was vivid and dramatic. No wonder that the fair listener had clasped her hands and trembled at his imminent peril.

"Be not discomfited," he said, smilingly, "for you see no harm has befallen me; not even a wound have I received."

Helena blushed and resumed her work; but William, who had listened attentively, said, suddenly, "You have received no wound, it is true, but your sleeve has. See, it is torn up to the elbow, and rudely sewn together with white



Harry Wyndham's adventure.



thread. Here is some work for you, Fräulein Helena, by your leave. Had you a scuffle?"

"Ay, that we had. I felt at once," thus Wyndham continued, "that the arms that held me were nervous, but not a match for me in wrestling; so, chancing the fulfilment of the threat, I made a sudden twist, dug my elbow into my antagonist's ribs, for I had perceived that he wore no corselet, and in a few seconds I was kneeling on his chest, and my hand was on his throat."

"Ha, ha," laughed William, "they know nothing of our Scottish tricks, these lowland villains. I warrant it was a Dutchman, or one of Count Mansfeldt's old thieves."

"He looked a worse rogue than they," answered Harry,— "a worse rogue than any I have ever seen; and yet methinks there is some good in the villain. I know not whether it be that he speaks our tongue, or——"

"Our tongue!" ejaculated William; "was he a Scot?"

"I know not what he is; but he said in good plain English, though with a marvellous accent, 'Spare me, captain; for the love of the

Virgin, spare me!’ And with that he looked so imploringly at me with his black eyes, and through the knotted maze of his dark hair, that I had not the heart to make his face darker than it was. If I had not heard him say those words I would have throttled him for a gipsy, for such he looked, and such to all appearances, and by his own confession, he is. His ragged dress, his tawny hide, and the few gaudy rings he wore on his fingers marked him for that too; but his speech was so natural, it could scarce have been foreign. I looked for a moment at the wild face, and said, ‘That is a bold request to make when you have but now shown me what you mean by sparing. Here, help!’ and with that I called to McDonald, my lieutenant. But ere I could raise my voice again the gipsy implored me so piteously to call no help, not, at any rate, until I should have heard him, that I resolved to hear him, wondering what he could have to say. It came to this. He is an Irishman by birth, a vagabond by nature, a thief from necessity, and a gipsy by profession. Before this town was besieged he used to visit it regularly, and live, I dare say, at the

expense of some of its inhabitants. But last time he was here his wife—for you must know this man is married—fell ill, and deprived him of half his means of living, while she doubled the expenses thereof. This forced him to be somewhat bolder and sharper in his dealings than he would have been, and one evening he was forced to fly out of the town, leaving his wife behind him in a miserable garret."

"Stay," interrupted Helena, "methinks I know that woman; at least, there is a poor gipsy woman in the hospital now who was found by Herr Wechter in a miserable garret, almost starving. She is recovering,—in truth, she is recovered, and would be dismissed from the cares of charity were it not that she has no place to go to. I feel assured that this is the same woman, for she told me even to-day that she greatly fears her husband is dead. For though the town is besieged, she says, he would have found some means of entering it and coming to her help."

"And so he would," said Wyndham, "had I not bearded him in his very den. He told me he intended to swim across to-night to the city and

endeavour to get in ; if not to-night—to-morrow night, until he was either successful or caught. He tried last night, and failed. That probably was the sound the sentry heard. But now comes the difficulty. His lamentable tale of woe, his motherless children—for he has three young children somewhere in Poland, he said—and his own grief, made me forget my duty. I did not only not take him with me as a prisoner and spy, but I promised to help him if I could. But now that I consider the affair, methinks I have committed two blunders. I have, firstly, promised what I cannot fulfil ; and secondly, I have not fulfilled what I promised. You see, I stand in need of all your counsels."

"It looks bad," said William, after a pause ; "if not to us, to others. Who knows but that these two are in reality spies, playing into each other's hands, and intending to learn the secrets of this town under the protection of our pity?"

"Nay, then, Herr Lieutenant," said Helena, "'twere best to let this woman join her husband outside as soon as possible. That she was really ill there is no doubt, and the nature of her grati-

tude appears to me too genuine to be a mere disguise. Besides, she has seen nothing of the condition of Stralsund, except as far as it could be seen in the hospital, and she cannot but believe that there is health and plenty in the town. It were perhaps the best polity, as well as the greatest mercy, to let her go."

"Thank you, fair fräulein," said the captain. "I feel that you have hit upon the solution. But how shall we contrive to let her go?"

"Why, as to that," said Baverley, "you must consult Colonel Holk."

"Colonel Holk!" cried Wyndham, in amazement; "why, good William, you are jesting. You know that Colonel Holk is as jealous of us Swedes and Scots as ever soldier was of another. And if he knew how I had neglected my duty this morning, he would have me before court-martial to-night; I feel assured of that. I would far rather consult Lord Hamilton, our own commander. He will advise us what to do."

"Well, let us go at once, then, ere it grow late. And that reminds me that I should have gone before to Herr Wechter, who awaits me at the

Franken Thor. I shall meet you at the St. Jacoba barracks. But, hark you, keep your helmet on ; I fear this silence bodes us no good, and we have hot work before us."

He went, and his friend rose to follow him. Helena rose too at this, but with some embarrassment in her looks. Baverley's last words had reminded her of the scene with her betrothed, and his threat. Its dreadful meaning came upon her with full force, and made her tremble. She laid her hand timidly on the young soldier's arm and arrested his departure.

"Herr Captain," she said hesitatingly, "I have terrible misgivings that some dreadful event is going to happen to you. Indeed it is more than a misgiving. I pray you be cautious and guarded, and let not your passions be roused by any provocation."

"Nay, fräulein, I understand you not. Has some one threatened me? I knew not that I had an enemy."

"Nor did I until to-night," said she, blushing, and with tears in her eyes ; "but oh, take care, for his passion is dreadful and uncontrollable."

He understood whom she meant, and his heart gave a leap; for he saw at a glance what it must have cost her to give him that warning against her own betrothed. He kissed her hand and left her in silence.

CHAPTER V.

THE QUARREL.

CAPTAIN WYNDHAM slowly directed his steps towards the St. Jacoba barracks, situated at the back of the St. Jacoba church. Standing armies were in those days little known, and barracks, consequently, there were few, except in the residences of the emperors and kings, whose body-guard always had a building for themselves. In times of war, when soldiers were levied everywhere, and when besieged towns had to support a force for which little or no provision had been made, they were generally quartered upon the citizens; and their uncouth and violent behaviour made the burden of war fall with double severity upon every family. The magistrates of Stralsund had understood this, and endeavoured as far as possible to meet the difficulty. An empty warehouse, which in times of prosperity had been used for storing grain and other staple commodities, was fitted up as barracks. It produced an un-

doubted relief for the citizens ; but on the other hand it was found that this advantage was almost balanced by an evil, very natural indeed, but more rapidly developed than cured. A number of soldiers thus brought together under one roof, neither restrained by the hardships of a field campaign, nor diverted from evil companionship by the continual change of scene, were not long in sinking to that low level of morality which was formerly only indicated by the exceptional example of the worst amongst their numbers. The officers, too, especially of the Danish forces, were far from giving their troops an example of that chivalrous spirit and that conscientious endeavour to abstain from quarrels which formed one of the most important of their published resolutions.

There was, it is true, a vast difference between their conduct and the gross debauchery that reigned in the Imperial army. But there was also a vast difference in the discipline that reigned on either side of the walls of Stralsund. There were two things that combined to spread a spirit of dissatisfaction and strife amongst the garrison. There was want, and there was jealousy.

Stralsund, which presented to the enemy its impregnable bastions defended by dauntless and dogged warriors, was nevertheless in itself a scene of petty strife and fierce, though bloodless, contention. It was possessed by three rival powers. The citizens, determined to hold out to the very last and to retain their liberty, had enrolled themselves as one man, and formed the burgher-guard. The Danish garrison, commanded by Colonel Holk, had arrived in the town before the siege had well begun ; and in the absence of the promised help from Sweden, that officer had been chosen as military commander. He was a man of undoubted talents, but of morose and unso-cialable temperament. He had few friends, but he might have had many admirers had he not taken care to make himself so many enemies. Never very popular even amongst his own troops, he became less so when Swedish help arrived under Lord Hamilton. It even began to be suspected that he purposed playing the town into Danish hands as soon as the siege was raised. It was hinted and whispered that several of the young officers in the burgher-guard had received tempt-

ing offers to enter the Danish army, should they assist in bringing this about. And it was feared that not a few had tacitly accepted, or but faintly rejected, such proposals. It was at any rate certain that there existed a much more agreeable intercourse between the Danes and the Stralsunders than between them and the Swedes and Scots.

The magistrates and town-council of the besieged city, whom these rumours had not escaped, were alarmed, and put on their guard. Christian of Denmark was preferable to Wallenstein or Ferdinand ; but to escape the latter by submitting to the former appeared to them a very poor reward for their present self-negation and valour. The acts of the colonel were therefore closely watched, and a silent resolution was taken that at the first opportunity he should be deprived of the command. A new supply of help, under two experienced and popular officers, was every day expected from Sweden, and it was understood that their arrival would give the desired opportunity.

The relations, meanwhile, between the Swedes and Danes were far from amicable. The necessities of discipline prevented an open rupture, and

outward courtesy between officers was strictly enforced; but the men, less accustomed to control, and not so easily managed, were often engaged in petty squabbles, which it needed every attention to prevent spreading into a contention that would speedily have ended in disaster.

When Captain Wyndham approached the street in which the barracks were situated, he was agreeably surprised in meeting with one of his own countrymen who had been wounded two days before. It was thought at the time that the wound was highly dangerous, and that the invalid would not recover; but he now limped towards the captain with a beaming face, exclaiming,—

“Well met, my friend! well met! You see, I am not one of the dead yet, although that vile surgeon would have it so. When he saw that I had a bullet in my thigh, it actually occurred to him to try and fish it out, instead of cutting about and bleeding me to death. And lo! the fellow had not been busy more than a few minutes, when out came a small piece of lead that would have poisoned my whole body. You see, I am almost well again.”

"I am delighted, Dunnellan, for we could not well afford your loss at present. I am told that you received some letters from England by yesterday's ship. I expect some, and I am anxious to know how affairs are in London. Are you advised at all?"

"Advised and ill-advised, it seems to me, for such a load of wrongs and complaints as these Londoners now utter would make us think their lot uncommon hard. There's nothing but the king, the king, the king; and when the king slips out of their reach they fasten their foul spite upon my Lord Buckingham. They're very like my surgeon, who, when he saw that he might not cut off my leg, would needs cut off my arm, or at least my hand, as a kind of compensation."

"Come, good Dunnellan," answered Wyndham with a slight laugh, "I think I see the reason of your discontent with these Londoners. Some fair lady at court has written you a letter full of admiration for my Lord Buckingham. But I doubt you would rather fight the Poles under Sir Alexander Leslie, than go with the duke to Rochelle and get beaten by the French. I fear

he is an evil counsellor and a wretched soldier. But, what is this tumult I hear? What can have roused the people?"

Ere Dunnellan could answer, there came running towards them a Swedish soldier, his yellow locks flying in the wind, his leathern jacket thrown open, and his whole dress showing signs of disorder.

"Quick, captain!" he cried in Swedish. "There is mischief brewing at the barracks. Your Scottish men look as if they wanted blood, and some of the Danes are in no peaceful mood either."

Without pausing to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, Wyndham and his companion at once turned towards the barracks. The narrow street resounded with the clamour of quarrel, and the gateway, which gave access to a yard, was filled with soldiers who expressed their indignation in loud shouts of "To the rescue!" "Bundle these Danes out of the house."

It was with some difficulty that Wyndham pushed his way through this crowd; for although they were his own men, they were too much

excited to ascertain who it was that endeavoured to pass them. At last, however, he gained the courtyard, and here he saw at once what it was that so ruffled their spirits. It had been enacted by the authorities of the town, that in order to put some check to the frequent squabbles of the armed men, those who were found quarrelling should be seized, handed over to their commanding officer, and receive a certain number of lashes, according to the quality of the offence. The courtyard was nearly square. In one corner of it a company of Danes, armed to the teeth, formed a wall bristling with sharp steel points, which so effectually cut off the angle that the few persons within it had not a chance of escape. The rest of the yard was filled with Scots and Swedes, who were pressing more and more closely upon the extended pikes. Some were trying the edges of their 'swords upon the polished points, others looked with ominous attention at the locks of their immense horse-pistols, while the greater number were shouting to some one within the inclosed angle, and exhorting him to remain firm and not to surrender. And there, with the fiery locks

streaming over his broad forehead, his teeth firmly set, his brawny fist clutching the two-edged sword of the Scottish musketeers, stood a tall, almost gigantic Scot, who looked as if he intended fully to follow up the advice of his clansmen. His back was against the angle, and his eyes were fixed on five Danes, who were evidently instructed to seize him, but who found their duty somewhat difficult.

As Wyndham's eyes flew over all this, he saw at a window close to the imprisoned Scot three figures, one of which he immediately recognised. It was Theodore Wechter; and, as their eyes met, Wyndham felt instinctively that he was the originator of this tumult, and that his intention lay deeper than the mere seizure of that soldier.

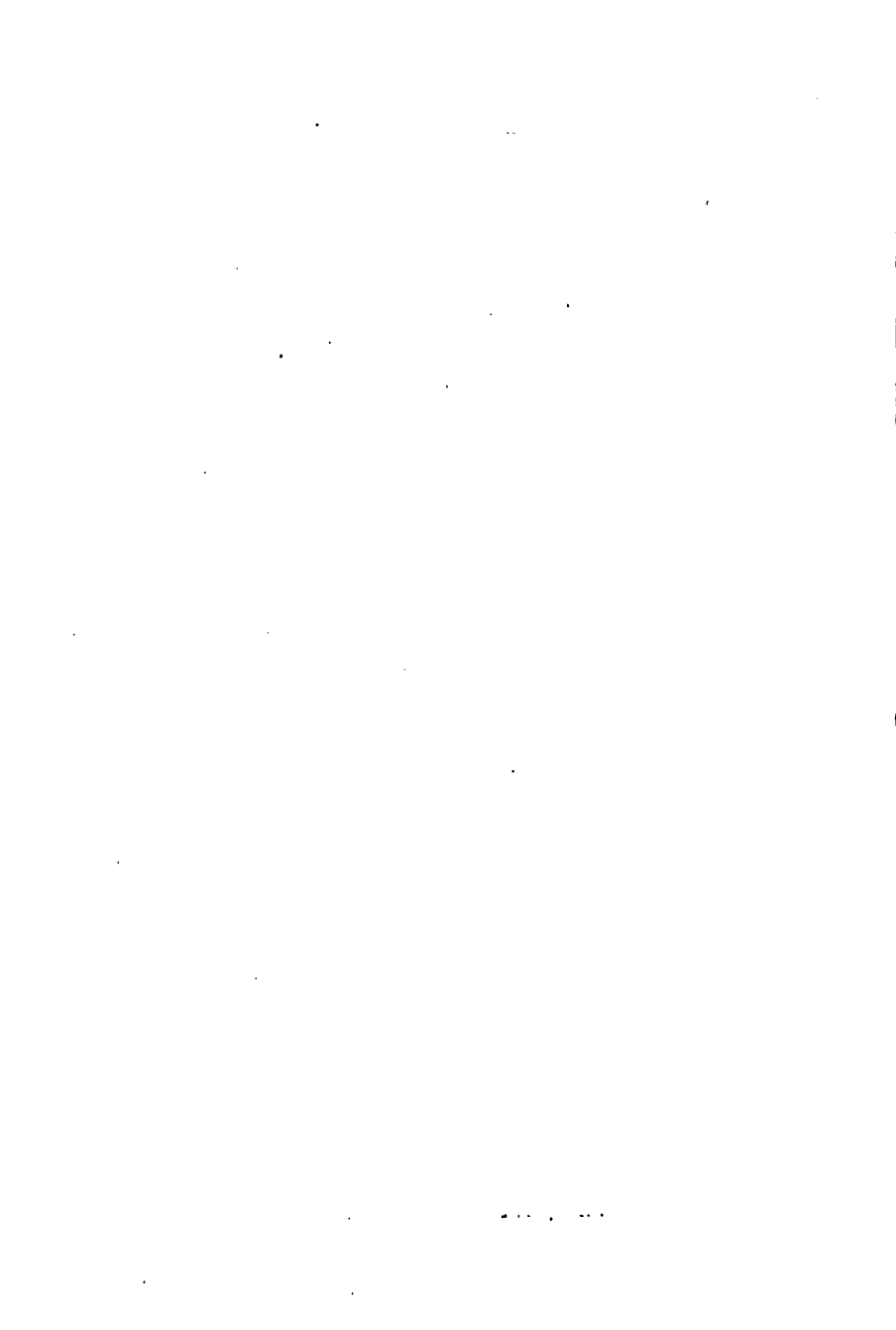
Meanwhile his appearance on the scene had silenced the occupants of the court. All eyes turned with eager expectation to the spot where the plume of his helmet could be seen, and followed it to the window occupied by the officers.

"Are you the officer in command of this guard?" courteously inquired Wyndham of the Danish officer who stood by Wechter's side. "If



The captain of the guard wanted.

[Page 62.]



so, have the goodness to explain to me the nature of this tumult."

"I cannot satisfy your curiosity, sir captain," answered the Dane, shrugging his shoulders. "I must refer you to my neighbour. He begged me to command my men to seize yon Scot; indeed, he did so himself, and promised to take all the responsibility."

Wyndham raised his eyebrows as though he were astonished, and glanced inquiringly at young Wechter.

"I am not aware, sir, that I owe you an explanation," said the latter, indifferently; "I shall do what the law says, and hand him over to my Lord Hamilton. He, I believe, is the commanding officer."

"Nay, then, I will have nothing more to do with the business," cried the Dane. "I am weary of these continual differences that begin and end in words. If you will not use this moment to settle what, I presume, is scarcely worth the while, help yourself. I shall hand the prisoner over to his captain." And leaning out of the window, he gave the command to fall out. The pikes were

raised, the men fell into disorder, and with half-sullen, half-contented faces, made way for the liberated Scot, who strode up to his captain, and handed him his sword.

"They would have had a tough job in taking this thing from me, captain," said he, in broad Scotch, and with a look of defiance at Wechter; "for I would have died ere I would have been flogged by any but my own sergeant."

A quick flush spread over Wyndham's face; but before he could utter a word Dunnellan said, looking fixedly at the young burgher, "Did you intend to administer punishment to a Scottish soldier, my young sir?"

"Had you but come a few moments later, you would have witnessed it," was the curt reply.

But I am quite willing to transfer it to some one else, if he be not afraid."

"Afraid!" cried the other, growing purple with rage. "See, there's my answer!" And plucking the leathern glove from his hand, he hurled it at the young burgher. Wyndham caught his hand just in time to cause it to fall harmless to the ground. But the insult had been given, and the

two men looked at each other defiantly, while a cheer broke from the Scots who had crowded round the two officers, and who perfectly understood the meaning of the little pantomime.

"What a fool you are, Dunnellan," whispered Wyndham; "you know we cannot allow a duel; and what is the meaning of this provocation? I charge you on your honour to give him no meeting, for I fear his hatred is not against you, but against me. He must have known that Roger is my body-servant."

"Ay, captain, and methinks that is the reason he would have flogged me," said Roger; "for he came here not many moments ago, looking as dark as a thunder-cloud, and he saw me wrestling in this yard with a Dane whom I had thrown to the ground in fair fight. 'Ah! that is Wyndham's servant,' said he; 'it is time we made an example of him and his master.' And with that he caused me to be arrested by the guard. It is a good thing that our men were near at hand."

Wyndham shook his head and replied nothing. The men, seeing that the difference had been settled, retired. Roger, whom his master con-

signed to the charge of a sergeant, was led away, and Wyndham and Dunnellan remained alone.

"Promise me that, whatever happens, you will not fight with that young hot-headed fool," said Wyndham.

"I cannot promise that; the honour of our regiment is involved."

"Then I must hasten to Lord Hamilton to see that it is prevented; for I feel certain that he bears *you* no ill-will, but me, and I cannot consent to change hands with you." He left the barracks with a hasty step, but had scarcely turned the corner of the St. Jacoba street when a cannon-shot came howling through the air. It was followed by others in rapid succession, and in a few minutes war was once more busy around the city.

CHAPTER VI.

DISMOUNTING THE "DEMON."

THE guns of the Imperial batteries, which had been silent the whole of that morning, now began playing upon the three principal gates of Stralsund with redoubled force, and were answered from within with equal energy. As Captain Wyndham reached the house where Lord Hamilton had been quartered, he was met by an orderly, who communicated to him that an attack upon the Franken Gate seemed to be preparing, and that his company was forming on the quay. Lord Hamilton was already there, as the orderly said, to give them "tit for tat." Wyndham immediately turned about, and going round by the Town-hall, intended crossing the market, that being the shortest way to the quay. But as he turned the corner of the building, several people came running towards him with evident signs of alarm. At the same moment pieces of slate of no contemptible size fell within a few yards of him into a

thousand shivers, and a loud crash convinced him that something unusual had happened.

He was not long kept in doubt. Quickly running round the Town-hall, he followed the gaze of the few people whom fright and consternation had not completely overtaken, and just as he lifted his eyes to the magnificent spires of St. Nicholas church another crash, louder than before, and a shower of slate that made his position extremely dangerous, told him that the besiegers had succeeded in aiming one of their guns at the spire, and would set the church on fire before the sun had set. Not a moment was to be lost. Seizing his sword in one hand and his helmet in the other, he ran to the quay. Soldiers met him everywhere, for by this time the drums sounded the alarm all over the town. The enemy did not seem to have spent their morning without profit ; for as he ran along the quay he could see that some of the most prominent of the jetties which ran out into the sea were being shot to pieces, the balls making sad havoc amongst the boats that were tied to them. Breathless and panting, he arrived at the church of the Holy Ghost, and found the whole of the Scot-

tish regiment drawn up behind it. Baverley gazed at him in amazement, but he interrupted him with the impatient question: "Where is Lord Hamilton?"

"He is at the bastion, commanding the guns. I spoke to him about the woman, and he will not hear of it."

"Woman? what woman?" asked Wyndham, whom the whole circumstance had escaped.

"The gipsy woman, of whom you spoke but now."

Wyndham uttered an impatient exclamation, and turned towards the bastion, when another crash and several exclamations stopped him. Pieces of slate, splinters, and stones were flying about, and several of the Scots sank down, wounded and stunned. The Holy Ghost church seemed another aim for the Imperial guns. He paused for a moment, looked thoughtfully at the spire and at the men, and calling Baverley to him, pointed to some sheds in the distance, saying, "Take the men away from the church, and post them near those sheds. I think they have an object in aiming at these spires. I am going to the bastion."

The bastion was enveloped in a cloud of smoke, and presented a scene of great activity. Heaps of shot, neatly piled, lay on the ground. The swarthy gunners, looking grim and ominous, like their guns, were silently doing their work. Leaning against the parapet, or kneeling on the ground, so as to escape the bullet of the enemy, they kept their eyes fixed upon their officers, jumping to their post at the word of command, and performing their duty with firm-set teeth, or even with a muttered joke. A small group of officers sat on the ground, with a plan of the works before them on a drum. They were in earnest discussion, and frequently referred to the drawing.

"I am totally at a loss what to make of them," said one. "Yesterday they were pounding away at the Franken Gate as if they intended to burn all their powder in reducing it to ruins, and this bastion was scarcely safe for a dog to be in; and now they take no more notice of us than if we were still in Poland."

"And no wonder, my lord," returned Wyndham, who had overheard the last part; "and to my thinking there is great reason in what they do."

"Hallo, my dear Wyndham," said a Swedish officer; "what makes you so heated? It's surely a very bad sign to see an officer run himself out of breath?"

"And so would you be if you saw the tiles and slates flying about as thick as hail. My lord, there is not a moment to be lost if we would spare the St. Nicholas church. You know the enemy have two immense guns, as powerful as all the others put together, and which we call Demons. I am convinced that one of these has been aimed at the church, and they will begin shooting with red-hot shot when they have knocked the spire down. It is just within range of your bastion, and you might silence it."

"The demon!" exclaimed Lord Hamilton; "why that gun is in their most northern battery, and almost opposite this ravelin," and he pointed with his finger to the map. "It is entirely out of our range, and to silence it from the Franken Gate itself is impossible, for almost every gun there is dismounted."

"Down, captain! down!" shouted one of the gunners; "they can see your helmet and feather,

and they are taking aim ; I can see the gleam of their muskets."

At the same moment a volley of musketry rang from over the water, and the bullets whistled over their heads and crashed through the foliage of the trees. Wyndham took the warning and sank down on one knee, when a terrible report shook the earth, and a black cloud of smoke enveloped them. A short and grim laugh went up from amongst the gunners.

"That is the way, sir ; show them we have some powder left."

"Who said the demon was in their northern battery ?" asked Wyndham. "It is wrong ; I am convinced of it. They could not aim at the side of the St. Nicholas from there, but the balls would strike her in the back ; and now they hit her full in the side, so they must have removed the gun. Where is the plan ?"

"Here," said Lord Hamilton, laying his hand on it. "See, they are assembling their men in the trenches. We saw them paraded before our eyes, and we heard the bugles sounding. They are going to try an assault at the Franken Gate, and

want to keep us engaged ; that seems to me their intention."

At this moment an orderly hurried up, and saluting Lord Hamilton, informed him that the enemy had thrown a bomb on the market-place, by the St. Maria church, and had effected an immense amount of damage, as two regiments were drawn up there in anticipation of the assault.

"That proves my theory," exclaimed Wyndham, almost joyously. "You see what their real intention is. They make us believe that they are going to assault the Franken Gate, and so draw all our men out into the streets ; in the meantime they aim their shot at the spires of the churches, or throw bombs on the market-place,—mind you, on the *market-place*,—where in all probability the soldiers would be drawn up, and where consequently they can inflict the greatest amount of damage to the garrison. I can see——"

Another officer of the Danish troops here appeared on the scene, and threw a hasty look around him.

"Colonel Holk presents his compliments to your lordship, and——"

"Down, sir officer! down!" again sounded the warning from the gunner, but this time too late. A tremendous volley of musketry, far exceeding the first, crashed upon them. The officer staggered, turned pale, threw up his hands, and sank backward on the ground, a small stream of blood trickling from his lips. Lord Hamilton started up with an exclamation of impatience, and ran to the wounded man. Wyndham did the same; but as he glanced at the pale face, on which the colour of death was already settling, he recognised to his grief the young Danish officer with whom the conversation in the barracks had commenced. A bullet seemed to have pierced his throat, having slipped in between the corselet and the steel collar. His head hung heavily upon Wyndham's arms as he lifted it and raised the heavy helmet. The dark brown hair fell in a disorderly mass over the pallid forehead, and the blue veins in which his life's blood was already flowing tardily, stood out perceptibly, as upon a piece of polished marble. For a moment only the three officers stood around their comrade in silence. The exigencies of war leave but little time for those gentler

thoughts, which its terrible effects call forth in the sympathetic mind. The cries of battle drown the sigh of pity.

With knitted brow Lord Hamilton turned towards some of the gunners, and ordered them to carry the body to the hospital. Then glancing again at the plan on the drum, he said, in a stern and determined voice, "These muskets must be silenced. What advise, you, sirs?"

"My lord," said Wyndham, taking the plan in his hands, "allow me to give you my opinion of the real danger, and the mode of checking it. The enemy have thrown up opposite this bastion three redans, of which the one nearest the sea— But what is this?" said he, looking again at the plan, and throwing it aside with a movement of disdain; "this plan is signally wrong. See here— this is the position. I made this map carefully myself this morning from my observations at the Danholm; I could see the immense demon in this second redan as plainly as I see you. This is where it is; and there we must direct our fire. I pray you line the parapet with our musketeers; their locks carry a fair distance, and their aim is

sure. I will forfeit my life there is no attack intended on the gate. 'Tis but a ruse."

"You are very right, Wyndham, I believe," exclaimed Hamilton; "how could I be so foolish as not to see it? Strange, too, that this plan should be so wrong, for 'twas drawn by a young burgher of great promise, so Holk told me, who seemed to foster some affection for him. But be it so. Take you the guns, Wyndham, and pound away; dismount that dangerous demon, and your name will be mentioned to the king. And you, sir," to a sergeant, "bid Lieutenant Baverley march all his muskets close to the parapet towards this bastion, and let him spare no powder. These Imperialists fight without fear. They are all washed with the holy water, and they think their sins are absolved, so they should be ready for purgatory. I'll to the colonel, whose young friend deserves to be put in the public stocks,—and he shall be, if I have aught to say here."

Wyndham now closely examined the enemy's lines, and soon recognised the position of his demoniacal antagonist. Close application to the theories of that genius in the science of fortifica-

tion, Koevoet, had made our captain master of his gun. It was not long ere his shots, carefully aimed and repeated with rapidity, told upon the Imperial battery. For one hour and a half an incessant cannonade was kept up.

The enemy, perceiving that some new spirit possessed the guns of the besieged, directed their full fire to the obnoxious bastion. This was exactly what Wyndham wanted. He had calculated that when their attention was entirely directed to the Holy Ghost bastion, but little notice would be taken of the guns at the Franken Gate, which had been silent as yet. He therefore left the bastion under the superintendence of Dunnellan, and slipped round to the Gate. It was as he had expected. The enemy exposed themselves as if no Franken Gate existed, and he was able, without their noticing his movements, to aim two of his guns almost exactly at right angles with the direction of the fire from the bastion. The demon, an immense gun, which, with its counterpart on the other side of the town, was doing terrible damage, had poured its shot upon the bastion with fatal precision. Wyndham watched the black

muzzle slip out of the embrasure and vomit out its red thunder. Then he slowly bent down and aimed one of his guns carefully, saying, with a grim smile, to the gunner, "The moment I say fire, drop the match."

For a longer period than usual the terrible demon kept the listeners waiting. All eyes were strained ; some ventured to announce it when the flash of a minor gun dazzled their eyes. But Wyndham silently regarded through his glass the particular spot where the muzzle was to appear, without attending to what went on around him.

"Fire," he whispered, at last. Off went the gun, and the eager party were enveloped in a cloud of smoke. When it cleared up no muzzle appeared. The demon was dismounted, and from that moment never answered its mate from the other side of the walls.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER THE FRAY.

AS the shades of night stole over the contending parties, the fire from their guns became gradually less frequent, and the dull boom and thud that had filled the air for six hours at last gave place to an almost death-like silence. When it became clear to those of the city that no attack was intended, the garrison, which had been so hastily assembled, was dismissed ; and those of the inhabitants whose only means of defence and warfare was prayer, once more thanked God that, at least for that moment, the imminent peril had subsided.

Captain Wyndham, who was naturally very proud of his success at the bastion, knew his duty too well to remain at a post which was not strictly his, a moment longer than he could help. It was with pleasure therefore that he received the order to dismiss his men ; having done which he took his friend's arm, intending to go home and snatch a little rest. But Baverley was one of those men,

fortunate or unfortunate, as the case may be, in whose head only one idea rules supreme at one time. Indeed, that circumstance was the principal cause of his having accompanied his friend across the seas. They were both sons of well-to-do landholders in one of the southern counties of Scotland, and probably would have followed their fathers' peaceful occupation had it been left to William Bayerley's choice. But in this, as in most other matters of great importance, Wyndham generally decided for both, Bayerley's one great idea being to stick to his friend and follow him wherever he went.

Wyndham's soul had been fired by the accounts he had heard of the doings of his countrymen, some of them very well known to him, who had gone over to Holland or Sweden, to fight under Prince Maurice of Nassau, or the young King of Sweden. When he expressed a wish to join Sir Alexander Leslie in Sweden, his father gave a reluctant consent, but was pleased in his heart that the old spirit of the family had not yet died out. For the Wyndhams had been of English origin, but had been for centuries settled in the North, and some of them fell at Flodden.

Seeing Harry determined, it needed very little for Bayerley to make up his mind ; and so irrevocably was this done that his father, having to choose between giving his consent or seeing his son go off without it, wisely chose the former, and sent him off equipped to the best of his ability. From that time the two friends were scarcely ever out of each other's sight, fought side by side, and tasted the hardships and pleasures of a soldier's life in common. But the natural boldness and energy as well as the greater intelligence of Wyndham soon marked him out for promotion ; and it is thus that we see him captain after three years' service, while his friend, who cheerfully acknowledged his superiority, remained lieutenant. As they were walking together towards Pastor Hermann's house, where they were domiciled, Bayerley looked up, after a moment's pause, and said, " And what said my Lord Hamilton to you ? I warrant it was not overmuch, for he seemed mighty curt to me this morning."

"Nay, I did not plague him with my private concerns on such a day as this. 'Tis like enough he should be curt to any one. And, indeed, I had

no need to ask him about anything, and least of all about this poor gipsy woman. My own judgment tells me what I had better do."

"I should let her remain for the present, at any rate," said Baverley, "especially after what we have had this afternoon."

"Ay, and what is more, I am truly sorry that I ever allowed that villain, that gipsy or whatever he was, to escape my hands ; for I fear me he has made better use of his position on the top of that rock than I believed he would. I could wager my commission to a pound Scots that he made a survey of the town and all the market-places, and thus directed their fire to the most harmful spots."

"We'll have no wagers, if you please, for you know they are *pacta illicita*, or unlawful bargains ; and anything unlawful comes from the devil, as I firmly believe that gipsy did. But what you say about his having used the information he got on the top of that rock seems very probable. At any rate, I know Pastor Hermann's church is sorely havocked, and Dunnellan was wounded in the head and carried off, bleeding, so that I pitied him."

"Dunnellan!" exclaimed Wyndham; "why, he has scarce recovered from his other wound. Let us go to the hospital and see whether he be there. There is a wounded Dane, too, whom I should like to see; though his dimmed eye and blanched lips told a silent tale of hastening death. But let us go. He may be alive still."

The hospital, a small building in the western part of the town, was filled with wounded. Those two demons had committed sad ravages among the garrison; and the small rooms, badly ventilated and badly lighted, contained many a life hovering on the borders of death. But here, amidst these scenes of suffering almost unbearable, where men in the prime of life were thrown down, never perhaps to rise again,—where spirits, an hour ago buoyant and fearless, were slowly sinking into unconsciousness, ministering angels were softly stealing from crib to crib, and noiselessly, tenderly, and skilfully attending to the wants of the sufferers.

Wyndham and Baverley entered quietly, and in a whisper asked the sentry on guard whether an officer of the Scots had been brought in during the firing. The man could give them no precise infor-

mation, but thought that if he were in the hospital he must be in the room immediately to the right of the entrance, since all the wounded had been carried thither. Meeting no one to whom they could apply for more direct information, they entered the room, but paused on the threshold. Beds had been improvised on the floor in a somewhat irregular manner, owing to the unexpected number of casualties. A lamp suspended from the ceiling threw a faint and smoky light upon the occupants, and gave their faces a yellowish colour. But one bed, in the corner farthest from the door, was strongly illuminated, and upon it the attention of such of the patients as had preserved sufficient strength was riveted.

A wounded man was supported in the arms of a young maiden, his head lay upon her bosom, and her gentle hand pressed a cool bandage to his burning forehead. A venerable old man, whose white locks presented a strange contrast to the dark and matted hair of the dying soldier, read in a low voice from a book before him; a strange-looking woman, with glittering eyes and the dark complexion of the daughters of the south, held a

light, which she shaded with her hand so as to temper its brightness to the fading sight.

"It is Dunnellan," whispered Baverley; "he is dying, as I feared. And there is the woman we spoke of, unless I am mistaken."

"Hush!" whispered his friend; "he is dying, indeed. Let us not disturb him. He is in the arms of Helena. If we move she must hear us or see us."

They remained where they were. The low but clear voice of the pastor read glorious words of comfort and assurance to the departing spirit. A muttered "amen," a sigh or a sob, was all that was heard in the room; and, as if by special arrangement, when the last words had gone forth from his lips, the solemn strains of an evening hymn,—played by the Swedish band on the market-place,—floated through the open window into the room.

At this moment the young nurse lifted her head, and her eyes met those of Wyndham fixed upon her with such an expression of admiration and sympathy that she blushed deeply. The two friends came to her side and kneeled down.

The wounded man recognised them, although he was unable to speak. His large eyes turned to Wyndham, and their silent eloquence moved him to tears; for no one who had not been present at the scene in the barracks that afternoon could comprehend what that look meant. It meant this,—

“Although I had received a warning, I heeded it not; in the arrogance of my recovered health I provoked the punishment which has now been dealt me by a higher hand. Oh, if I could but be at peace before the sun setteth, and part in anger from no man whose soul may follow mine ere it rise again to-morrow!”

And behind that look he saw thoughts about those by whom the news of his death would be received as a heavy blow; and a little pitying sorrow that his youth—his bright youth—should be cut off so suddenly; and a lingering look of affection at the fading twilight; and as many things more as might be told—if they could be told—in a long, long chapter.

Wyndham pressed the cold hand, and putting his lips to Dunnellan's ear, he whispered, “Shall I bring him hither?”

Dunnellan gave a faint nod, and a glimmer of light came across his face.

"There is some sore trouble that presses his spirit, I think," said the pastor, rising. "I have prayed that it might be taken away, and I trust it will speedily, for he has not long to live."

"I think I know what it is," said Wyndham, rising too. "I hope I may be able to relieve him. I shall return within the hour."

He hastened out of the house of death and through the streets, where the people were relating and exaggerating the day's evil, as if it were not enough; and it struck him painfully how little had been needed to put him altogether in Dunnellan's position; for the provocation at the barracks was on his lips, and the death that struck his comrade had passed over him a thousand times, and harmed him not.

Not knowing where to find young Wechter,—for it was he whom Dunnellan wanted to see,—he directed his steps to the barracks; but on crossing the Townhall Square, where the magistrates were assembled, he ran up against the figure of a man leaning against the door of the

St. Nicholas Church, with arms folded and his head sunk upon his breast. Wyndham gently laid his hand on the man's shoulder: "I have been seeking you."

The youth shook him off roughly, and exclaimed, "Begone! I shall not seek you until I shall want you! But leave me now, unless you would provoke me to raise my hand in unfair slaughter. You have done me enough harm this day already."

"Even therefore would I remedy the evil I have brought. Dunnellan, with whom you had a difference at noon, is dying, and he sorely wishes to see you and make peace ere he leaves this world. Oh, refuse him not!"

"Refuse him! Nay, not I! Go, tell him he has my full pardon, and all fair wishes on his journey. Know you not that my challenge was not meant for him, the sorry dog, but for a foreign cur of even meaner breed."

"Come, I am willing to interpret your language to-morrow; but put aside all rankling thoughts to-day, and follow me. It is not I that beg, but he and your betrothed, and Pastor Hermann."

“Ah,” answered the other, with a rude laugh, “no wonder you were there with such pleasant company. But go. I have no sympathy with the living, and I have none for the dying.” And turning round he strode away.

CHAPTER VIII.

BITTER FRUITS.

THE following morning, when Wyndham had refreshed himself from the fatigues of the previous day, he left his slumbering friend at an early hour, and hurried to the quay to inhale the cool breath from the sea. It was Sunday, and everything was silent in the city. The week had ended with carnage, another would begin with prayer, but ere that too was gone by, a terrible fate was to come over the unconscious town. Somewhat to his astonishment, the only other person he found on the quay was old Wechter, who returned his good morning with a gravity which was scarcely in keeping with his usual politeness and affability. In the opening chapter it was stated that he was one of the most respected and best liked of the magistrates of Stralsund. His wealth, and the judicious and benevolent use to which he put it, his unaffected piety and his unflinching honesty, made him the darling of the people ; and even the fact that

he belonged to the Calvinistic sect seemed an advantage, by the bold yet kindly and generous manner in which he defended his principles, without following the general example of heaping anathemas on his opponents.

It would be strange if with so much prosperity there were not in good Herr Wechter's house a skeleton in the cupboard, a thorn in his flesh, the pains of which were carefully concealed from the gaze of the curious, but felt with increased severity in hours of solitude. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick ; but hopes shattered and cruelly broken, what effect have they upon the heart ! When a man occupies a prominent and honourable position, which he owes to his own exertions, it is but natural that his gaze should travel to that period of his life when his name will be borne, when his position will be occupied, and when he himself will be reflected, by his children. When he is at the same time a Christian and a patriot, he will endeavour to imbue them with those principles which are the mainstay of his happiness, and he will count it a pleasure to relate to them passages from a life

full of experience which he can afford to look back upon with a smile. He will point out to them the dangers that threatened him and that seemed so harmless, the little causes that had such great consequences, and the ends that were commonly considered to be so important, but that repaid the labourer so very scantily; and even when his life has been one of such hardships and trials and suffering that its recollection can scarcely fail to bring back with it part of the pain that was felt at the time, even then he does not grudge having to draw upon his memory for a topic so unpleasant when he sees that the lessons it teaches make a deep impression upon the mind of those whom he desires to teach.

Herr Wechter could not have been accused of building castles in the air, if he had hoped that the only son which remained of all his children would to some extent occupy such a place, would with eagerness listen to such counsels, and would prefer his father's experience to his own. But he was disappointed. Long before Theodore had ceased to be a child in years, he had ceased to be a child in affection and obedi-

ence. Many years before he had arrived at the age of discretion, he presumed to decide between right and wrong ; and what pained his father most of all was this, that he could detect in his son's decisions and arguments that he was actuated, not by some precocious spirit of scrutiny, or some extraordinary genius for criticism, but by a sullen, dogged, and unholy spirit of opposition, which caused him to receive his father's lessons and his mother's gentle persuasions with ungrateful and unchildlike suspicion.

It is easy for those who have not witnessed the disease to talk of a remedy ; and many are prepared to show that mercy, or the rod, or love, or sternness, or all of these, are the infallible antidotes to the poison. But rare, it might almost be said unknown, is the wisdom that can treat a case so difficult, so heartbreaking, and so unpromising. Herr Wechter may possibly have possessed that wisdom, but it is to be feared that the complaint of his child was incurable ; for when he had watched him with ceaseless anxiety from year to year until he became a man, and when the time had arrived that he

possessed some right to that tone which he had so long assumed, there was scarcely anything in religion, in politics, or even in business matters, which they had in common. His gloomy and distrustful temper was directly opposed to his father's cheerful and benevolent nature.

It was therefore with no great astonishment, though with undiminished pain, that Herr Wechter saw his son display but little interest and no enthusiasm in the great struggle with which, at the beginning of 1628, the city was threatened. Neither phase of the Reformed religion interested him in the least. His political opinions, as far as in those days they could be separated from religious opinions, were undecided. Had he been born in Vienna or Paris, and had his father been a chamberlain of the Emperor or King, his spirit of opposition would have led him to prefer a commonwealth such as that of Stralsund. But now that Herr Wechter was one of the chief magistrates of that commonwealth, he suspected, and suspected rightly, that Theodore's sympathies must of necessity lie in another direction. Since the Danes had entered the town, however, he

became fixed, and to some extent outspoken. He openly sided with them in all disputes, warmly defended the suspected colonel, and advocated the plan of placing the town unconditionally in the hands of King Christian. For some time Herr Wechter had doubts whether any inducement had caused his son to advocate such a plan ; for the idea of going contrary to his father's opinions and the general sentiments seemed a sufficient bait to tempt him.

Within the last few days, however, certain things had convinced him that his son had added disloyalty to the catalogue of his sins, and that he was one of those of the burgher-guard who had accepted the offer of Danish promotion. A greater blow it would scarcely have been possible to give to Herr Wechter. It was no longer in his power to hide his grief under the usual smile ; and when Captain Wyndham approached him, he received a curt answer instead of the usual pleasant greeting.

"I would be vexed," said Wyndham, "if I could ascribe the cause of your coldness to my demeanour. If it be so, I pray you let me hear it, so that I may ask your pardon."

The burgher-captain looked at the speaker's honest face, and finding that it expressed sympathy and grief, became involuntarily somewhat gentler in his tone, as he said,—

"There is nothing I know of, sir captain, that could have turned my mind against you. Believe me, I honour and respect you as much as ever. But see, the sun has risen hours ago, and I should be home."

And with this he turned towards the city. But Wyndham laid a gentle hand upon his arm.

"Stay, Herr Wechter. You have some sorrow. Is it anything in which I can help, or in which my sympathy would be of avail? I hope your son Theodore is not wounded, for I like him,—I like him indeed."

The drowning man clutched at the straw. Was it possible that this foreigner, the only man whom he had ever heard express a liking for his son, might be able to give him some direct proof of his son's innocence? He looked hard at him for some moments.

"Ay," he said at last, "he has been wounded."

"Truly? In what part? Was it badly? I saw him yesternight, and he seemed well."

"Ay, it is badly, dangerously," answered Herr Wechter.

"And where? In what part of his body? Is there hope for him?"

"I am afraid not, Herr Captain; although I am overjoyed to find you with such feeling for my son."

"Oh, I am grieved to hear this!" cried Wyndham, in accents of genuine sorrow; "the more because, unwittingly, I must have pained him yesterday. Lord Hamilton had a chart of the city and of the enemy's works, and I condemned it, and told him it was badly done; and I knew not it was your son's until afterwards. But I am truly sorry."

"Nay, good Herr Wyndham, listen to me. That chart I know was drawn by my son, and drawn wrongly, because he knows not the art and secret of the craft. But I would ask you, on your word of a knight, have you not heard some rumours in the town about the Danes and their aspirations?"

"Who has not, Herr Wechter? But who that hears them does not see at once that they are absurd? But about your son; where is his wound?"

"I am coming to that; and now that I would continue, I feel as though to stop were best, for methinks I can hear in the tone of your voice, and see in the dim expression of your face, that you suspect my question and know its answer."

Wyndham looked down upon the quay, and said not a word.

"Then tell me," asked the other, almost fiercely grasping his arm and shaking it slightly, "do you know it for a truth that my son is a traitor?"

"Nay, I know nothing, nor will I be convinced that he is. That were too foul a crime for one who bears your name."

"Ah!" said the burgher, bitterly, "the crime is no such great stranger when the thought is a friend; and what thought has been too foul for him not to be taken into his brain and hugged and brooded over till it reached its fullest maturity of wickedness? Oh that he had died, like the rest, when he was young! for surely it is better

to miss them all here than to miss one hereafter. But, say you truly, have you heard nothing?"

"I have heard that he favours the Danes, and would have entered their ranks but for the magistrates' forbiddance. But that is no great crime."

"Young man," said Wechter, solemnly, "it is no great crime; but know you not that a feather may turn the balance? Had he been true in other things, he had not failed greatly in this. But he has crossed me in all things; he has done as much to disgrace my name as I and my ancestors have done to raise it. When I was his age I was the bosom friend of Oxenstierna at Jena. And now, when I have been twice elected burgomaster,—mind you, twice! and that happens but to few,—he would betray the town to the Danes. Oh! I heard it yesterday, not long before the cannonade began, and I called him to me. He would not deny it, and I was stern with him,—oh, I was stern!"

"And you did wrong to be so stern,—for he himself is such; and when did steel, when it met steel, ever produce aught but sparks? You should

have taken him to your heart, and chid him like a father ; that might have touched him."

"I know it would not, Herr Captain," answered the burgher, his face assuming a sad expression ; "I felt my anger roused at the sight of him, and I have no longer faith in soft words."

"And yet," said Wyndham, "I earnestly believe that neither you nor any other living being has as much influence over him as the sweet angel to whom he is betrothed. She is all gentleness, and she rules him."

"Ay, but I am afraid he will lose her too," said the father ; "for his wiles and humours are at times past angels' patience. But do *you* speak to him. You say you like him ; you can better bend your mind to gentle persuasion than I can. And now let me begone, for there is service in Pastor Hermann's church, and I would hear him this morning. God give you good day."

Wyndham looked after the departing magistrate with very mingled feelings. Such genuine sorrow, such deep affliction at his son's perversion, such honesty and simpleness of mind, and withal, such petty pride and vanity !

CHAPTER IX.

A STRANGE VISIT.

A WEEK went by; Wyndham tried earnestly to fulfil his promise to Herr Wechter; but as it had been given without much hope, he was not greatly astonished at the failure. The moment he endeavoured to enter into any kind of confidential and friendly intercourse with Theodore, he was repulsed with haughtiness. But when he threw out a delicate hint to warn him against his alliance with the Danes, it was as if he had applied a match to some explosive substance. The young burgher's wrath was terrible. He was aware, he said, from what quarter this admonition came; and he was astonished that his father had not sent one of his apprentices to do the business, as they would certainly have done it less clumsily. He even went so far as to ask Wyndham how much he was paid for his service. Being thus repulsed, Wyndham resolved not to try again, and had as little intercourse with

Theodore as he could; the more as he saw plainly that it was the latter's intention, in some way or other, to force him to a duel.

He so regulated his sojourn at the pastor's house, therefore, that there should be no ground for the most jealous lover to suspect that his attentions were directed to Helena. It cost him a hard struggle to miss her beautiful face, nor hear her silvery voice as it consoled the patients under her care; but he knew that he must do it in justice to himself as well as to her betrothed. In spite of this avoidance, however, Theodore's demeanour became more gloomy and insolent than ever. To Helena he behaved with a coldness and nonchalance that cut her to the heart. To her amiable father, with a contempt for all that was sacred and revered by the old man, that made Bayerley's blood boil in his veins; and had it not been for his friend's positive instructions and earnest entreaties they would have quarrelled. And, yet, through his coldness to Helena there sometimes shot a flame of love, of admiration, so intense, so rapturous, that it moved her generous heart with tender pity, and

made her love this dark and rebellious spirit as angels may be said to love and weep over the fallen. She knew that she alone could save him from total misery. For to be loved by no one amongst men is indeed as miserable a condition as humanity can come to.

The behaviour of Helena's father all this sad while was truly touching. With a delicacy and forbearance that no one would have suspected in him who saw him in one of his violent fits of anger against the assailants of his doctrines, he strove to influence the youth's mind. By quaint stories sparkling with kindly humour and rich teaching, by kind arguments, by generous forgetfulness of what was due to his white hairs, he laboured to bend this tree. But it was of no avail. Theodore listened but heard not, and went away unrelenting.

Helena in the meanwhile was busily engaged in her work of charity in the hospital. Dannelan, although without hope, was still alive. His wound, which the science of those days was utterly unable to deal with, was fatal; but his life, that might have fled the moment he had

received the wound, lingered from day to day. What gentle care, what tender nursing could do to alleviate his pain, his patient and beautiful nurse did ; and it was only at his bedside that Wyndham had an opportunity of speaking to her or of hearing her voice.

One day, when he rose from the bedside of the unconscious soldier to visit Lord Hamilton, she approached him in a confused and hesitating manner. It seemed, indeed, as if she were on the point of making some request, when suddenly the gipsy woman entered and cast at her a glance of reproach. The young soldier fancied that her slight frame trembled ; but when he asked her whether he could be of any service, she paused, and said, suddenly, "No, Herr Captain, except you could tell me the watchword to-night at the Vehr-Gate, for Dunnellan woke up last night and asked for you in a faint voice. I sent to our house, but you were absent on night duty, and ere we could have had you here he was once more unconscious ; so, if we knew the watchword, we might send at once, and you might be here in time."

To say that Wyndham did not believe this would be saying too much, for he gave her what she required, and having respectfully kissed her hand, departed. But there was that in her air, her look, and the whole tenor of her speech, that seemed to him at variance with her usual self. He found a ready explanation in the manner in which she was circumstanced; and when he thought of the things she had to bear when yet so young, he pitied her, and loved her more than ever.

On the morning after Helena had made him the request at the bedside of his wounded comrade, Wyndham sat in the guard-house wondering whether Dunnellan had woken up and called for him. There was just the faintest possible glimmer in the east that heralded the coming day, but the lanterns and torches in the guard-house were still blazing. He had made the usual round of inspection, and found everything quiet, and he had stretched himself on the wooden form to snatch a few moments' sleep, when the sentry's challenge of "Wer da?" brought him quickly to his feet. He stepped out of the guard-house on to the quay, and started, for

there before him, in the red and yellow glare of a torch, and the pale and still uncertain light of the dawn, stood the form of Helena.

When she saw him, her head sank on her bosom; and there was a painful shrinking and hesitation in her demeanour that showed how fully aware she was of the strangeness of her act. Wyndham had not a word to utter. The light played on his cuirass and his own bronzed features not more fitfully than did conjectures and wonderments as to the cause of this visit fly across his brain.

"I am afraid, Herr Captain, you are somewhat astonished at my appearance?" said Helena, who had now recovered her self-composure, and spoke with a firm voice; "and, soothly, I myself would wonder were it not that I had good reason for my mission."

"Indeed," answered Harry, "I confess that your sudden appearance somewhat startled me; but I do hope the reason of your coming is not a sad one, for I could bear to see you in another capacity than that of the bringer of ill-tidings. But I pray you be seated."

"Nay, Herr Wyndham," answered Helena; and this time her voice trembled, notwithstanding her effort to control it. "I thank you for your attention, but I cannot accept it. I only came hither to tell you that your friend is no more. He died not more than half an hour ago."

Wyndham got more and more puzzled. That she should come herself in the very last extremity, and pray him come and see his friend in his last hour, he could have understood. But that she should come, and come alone, to tell him that his friend was dead, puzzled him extremely. He would have ascribed it to her love for him had he dared, or had he not known her high-minded modesty so well. He stepped out of the door, and seizing her hand, he said, in a low voice, "Helena, dearest Helena, forgive me; but was this well? What moved you to commit so great an indiscretion? Go home, and forgive me for having spoken so harshly to you."

As he spoke he felt her little hand tremble, and turn hot and cold. It seemed as if the sound of his low and earnest voice was more

than she could bear ; for she drooped, and had he not supported her slender frame, she must have fallen. She had covered her face with both hands, and for some moments she lay within his arms motionless. What strange variety of thought and emotion went through the honest captain's heart at that moment ! By a sudden effort Helena regained her self-possession. She did not raise her eyes to those of her companion, but she gave him her hand, saying, "Farewell, Herr Captain. You have not offended, though you have misunderstood me. I cannot now tell you what induced me to come to you, but some day I will explain it, and you will not blame me. I hope that day will not be far off. Farewell !"

A sweet though sad smile accompanied these words, and showed the young officer, through all his doubts and wonderings, that she did not blame herself for this act.

"O Helena !" he exclaimed, "I beseech you—"

"Hush, hush !" she said, hurriedly and with a look of pain ; "there is some one coming. I must go ; I dare not be seen !"

She hurried towards the nearest gate that led from the quay to the city. Wyndham made one or two steps as if he would follow her; but returning quickly, called his servant Roger, and directed him to follow the maid and see her safely home.

Scarcely had Roger followed the dim figure, when another approached the guard-house from the opposite side, and curtly answered the sentry's challenge. It needed no second listening to tell Wyndham that he heard Theodore's voice, the man of all others he could not allow to pass. He must stop him at any cost.

"What brings you here, at this unseemly hour, sir lieutenant? Any orders?"

"None," was the curt reply; and Theodore attempted to pass him.

"Softly, sir," said Wyndham, stepping in front of him; "what is your errand?"

"Let me by," said the youth in a tone of furiously pent-up passion. "Let me by, or as I live——"; he did not finish his sentence, but brought his hand to the hilt of his sword.

"Stay," answered Wyndham, calmly. "By

right, at that gesture I should bring out the guard and arrest you; and I promise you I shall do it if you make that motion again. I am the officer of the guard, and I desire your business at this hour of the morning.

"My business?" said Theodore, with a short laugh. "I have come too late to witness a touching interview. Tell me, captain, who is the lady I saw on this very spot a moment since? Have I any knowledge of her?"

Wyndham was silent. He would gladly have given any name, but he was no adept at telling falsehoods; and he felt that falsehoods would be thrown away in this case. By this time, however, he heard the clang of the gate as it admitted Helena into the town, and he breathed more freely.

"Come," he said, after a moment's pause, "this is too absurd. Your dislike for me has driven you to the verge of madness. Why *will* you hate me?"

"Why *will* you come between me and my hopes, my ambitions, my everything?" answered the youth; and in the dawn his face almost

terrified Wyndham with its wildness. "Did *you* not tell my father that I was in alliance with the Danes? Did *you* not tell Holk that I had endeavoured to create a disturbance in the barracks? Did *you* not condemn my chart of the town? Did you not with all your arts endeavour to alienate from me the only being that cares for me?"

Although he saw his opponent's steel glisten, Wyndham drew not. "Nay," he said, "I must not to-night. I cannot. I am on duty."

"That excuse melts before the sun, sir captain, for your duty ends with day. You will hear from me when you are at leisure. Meanwhile, I follow your lady; I would know her business, since you know mine."

CHAPTER X.

BROKEN AT LAST.

SCARCELY knowing how to meet Helena after what had happened that morning, Wyndham resolved not to go to the house until the hour should have come when she usually repaired to the hospital, or visited the sick of her father's congregation. A certain feeling of delicacy withheld him from taking any advantage the occurrence might have put in his way. His mind was so thoroughly made up as to the rights of Theodore, that he shrank from interpreting her visit in the manner most in accordance with his inmost feelings, and it seemed to him like a faithless breaking of his promise to Herr Wechter, not to do everything in his power to mend matters between the betrothed. Little did he know that at that very hour the breach had been widened beyond healing; and that, partly through circumstances, but mostly through the distrustfulness of his own temper, Theodore was led into

an act that directly influenced the whole of his life and the life of those with whom our story is connected. For what had happened?

At the hour when Theodore knew that his betrothed was generally alone, he presented himself to her, as may be imagined, in anything but a conciliatory and amiable spirit. This was no unusual thing for him, and for that very reason it had always been Helena's aim to chase the gloomy and angry clouds from his mind; and what with her beauty, the fascination of her manner, and the sweetness of a temper that would not be ruffled, it was seldom that she exercised her arts in vain. Such had been her conduct so long as she had nothing wherewith to reproach herself; but this morning it was different. There was now something to defend, and there was a consciousness within her that she could no longer meet his reproaches and suspicions with a perfect candour. Ah! she had not been able to do that for some time past, but the change had never till now been brought so clearly before her. Accordingly there was in her demeanour and in her look a hauteur, very trifling,

and easily to be subdued, but not by reproaches. Had Theodore understood this, he would have been wise.

The weather was still magnificent. The besiegers kept up a lazy cannonade that was scarcely answered by those of the city, except when either party, grown too careless by the absence of danger, exposed its men too much, in which case a sharp exchange of musket-shots would suddenly ring through the air.

Helena had taken up her position in the little room that opened into the garden, and there her spinning-wheel went busily round, and her nimble fingers threaded the flax with such dexterity that the eye could scarcely follow them. Presently the house-door latch was lifted, and a well-known step sounded on the red tiles wherewith the front room was paved. The door was pushed open, and the eyes of Theodore sternly regarded his betrothed. She had looked up from her work with a bright smile, intending to welcome him as usual; but the expression of his face, and perhaps the contrast it offered to the expression she had been conscious of calling forth on another

face that morning, made the smile fade upon her lips, and a silent nod was all she vouchsafed her lover.

"Did you expect another?" asked he, bitterly; "because methinks the expression of your face tells tales."

"In truth," answered she, with dignity, "I did expect another welcome this morning."

"Ah," said he, with a forced laugh, "a welcome, perchance, that would have been more agreeable, and that would have been a continuation of the tender farewell this morning on the quay?"

The silent look of reproach that Helena threw upon him fired his passion still more. He approached the spinning-wheel, and seizing it with no very gentle hand, arrested its motion.

"I have to congratulate both ourselves with the accident that brought me thither. Had I but known that you entertain such taste for morning walks, 'twould have been my pleasure to provide you with a safer guide. Hush! you need not look offended at my having stopped your wheel. I know *he* would not have done that; but——"

"Nay, you say truly; he would *not* have done

it, nor shall I allow you to do it. Pray let me work, and remember that you have no right whatever to dictate my comings and goings, as you seem to imagine."

"Aha!" said Theodore, entirely taken aback by so unusual a speech; "has he converted my little dove into a hawk? Listen, Helena! You know whose blood this is?"

And with these words he pulled his sword out of its scabbard, and showed her a deep red stain upon the steel. For a moment the maiden looked at the murderous and self-convicted weapon without seeming to understand what she really saw. Then turning deadly pale, a cry broke from her lips, and she tottered towards the door. Theodore sprang forward quickly, and caught her in his arms. But as she fell upon the cold steel of his cuirass, it seemed as if the touch worked upon her with magic. She shuddered, and with one effort loosened herself from his support. There was in her face an expression he had never seen before; there was in her blue eyes a certain fierceness that for the moment seemed positively to change their colour. She looked at him fixedly,

and pushing the golden hair away from her temples, exclaimed,—

“You have slain him—he who was innocent, who was good, who was so generous! You have slain him for an offence he had not dreamed of committing! Theodore, I might have loved you, and as your wedded wife I might have learned to honour and obey you. But now, I could not love his murderer—no, never! Oh, cruel, cruel!” and sobbing, she pressed her face against her trembling hands.

Theodore stood before her abashed, humbled, and terrified by her words. At the same time, she looked so exquisitely lovely in her pure sorrow, that he sank on one knee before her and endeavoured to seize her hand.

“Forgive me, Helena,” he cried; “I have gone too far. I only meant to show you what might be. My jealousy prompted me. Forgive me if I have erred, and let it show you that I love you so deeply that I cannot bear the thought of your loving another. Wyndham is alive; he is not even hurt. Ah! that seems to please you. He goes about as yet untouched, and if he lists can rob me of my only treasure.”

"Enough, sir," interrupted Helena, looking at him coldly, and withdrawing her hand; "you have been mean enough to use an artifice, so that you might entrap and surprise me. Your conduct now has taught me that I can never entertain for you that respect without which I should think it wrong to take you as my husband."

She turned from him coldly, and ere he could rush to the door she had left the room and had disappeared.

CHAPTER XI.

BEYOND HEALING.

WHEN the man, who anticipates an easy conquest is suddenly and totally defeated, the severity of his disaster will be in proportion to his own self-confidence.

Helena's generous and yielding spirit had made Theodore so unaccustomed to opposition, that for some moments after she had left the room he actually felt as though he had driven her from him, and by compelling her to confess that she favoured the Scot, had renounced her for ever. A curious coincidence ended this self-deception.

As he stood in the middle of the room, a sound as of some one talking vehemently reached his ear. The next moment the door opened, and Pastor Hermann stood on the threshold. His features wore a strange expression. The mouth that was usually parted with a humorous and pleasant smile was now firmly set and severe; the eyes flamed with an angry fire; the whole

figure, somewhat bent with age, was now erect and bold, and the head was thrown back with defiance. As soon as his eyes rested upon the youth, he advanced towards him with a firm step, saying,—

“And thou! thou art another of those who associate with the shameful betrayers of the Lord and His cause. I ask thee, how canst thou justify thy behaviour? In what respect is the Lutheran consubstantiation better than the Popish transubstantiation? Are they not both a cursed idolatry? Turn up the Bible from the first page to the last, and thou mayest have my head if thou canst find one word of such a doctrine in the holy book. Do they not twist the truth so that it becometh a lie? And wouldst thou put up with such children of Belial? I understand not how thou, a reformed Christian——”

“I?” asked the astonished young burgher, at once puzzled and irritated by this sudden theological outburst of the excited pastor. “I know not——”

“Yea, there lies the rub,” continued the Calvinist, in the same flood of words, which admitted

of no interruption. "Thou shouldst know at least that Lutheranism is worse than Popery, inasmuch as there is some sense, however small, in the Popish doctrines of confession and absolution. It behoves——"

"Nay, but, good pastor," said Theodore sternly, "I understand not——"

"How canst thou, who art foolish in thine own conceit? Nay, try me not with argument. I will shatter thy reason to the four corners of the earth: for thou hast eyes and thou seest not, neither, having ears, dost thou understand; and ere I can adopt thee as my son——"

He suddenly paused in his sentence while observing the pallor that overspread the youth's face. For the moment, the late interview and its result had vanished from Theodore's brain, but these words suddenly brought it before him in all its intensity.

"I think there need be little fear of that," said he bitterly, and with a wretched smile; "where father and daughter are both so intent upon breaking the chain that ties us, it should be stronger than it is, were it to stand the strain."

The pastor looked at him as one awaking out of a dream, and said slowly, "How now; what ails thee, lad? What was this about my daughter, and a chain that binds her? You look pale and saddened, surely nothing serious has befallen her?"

Theodore retained a sullen silence, for he thought the pastor was mocking him, whereas that good man, having but recently issued out of a pitched battle with several of his most determined opponents, and but dimly perceiving his change of audience, could not interpret an answer which he had not clearly understood.

"Pardon me, my son," he continued, in his usual affectionate tone. "I meant not to upbraid thee. But the spirit within me is like a roused lion when I encounter these foolish and strong-headed men——"

"And like the lion, you care not whom you attack, Herr Pastor."

"Truly. I have put my trust in the Lord, and I have not the fear of man," answered he, with a momentary flash in his eye. "I was but now holding forth to our syndic, and I have

overcome him, although he would not submit. I am grieved that my arguments should have wounded *you*, but truth is a sharp and two-edged sword——”

“Nay, Herr Pastor, it was not your arguments that wounded me; but you will please to remember that you refused to accept me any longer as a son. I forego that honour, since it is an honour no longer.”

“As how? These be strong words from your lips.”

“Ask your daughter, and if she gives you no answer, I have none.”

“My daughter?”

The old man said these two words with such grand dignity and perfect astonishment that Theodore looked somewhat abashed. But at this moment his eyes beheld something behind the pastor that clouded his brow again and compressed his lips—it was the face of his own father.

“Well, sirrah,” said the latter, regarding his son over the pastor’s shoulder with a stern look, “what should we ask of sweet Helena? Is the charge so grave that you cannot utter it?”

"No, sir," answered the son, sulkily; "but I care not to accuse her before so partial a tribunal. Why, sir, it wants but little knowledge to read in your face that you are, as usual, against me."

"And, my son," said the pastor, in a fatherly yet earnest tone, "I think in this case you are right. Come, I believe I know the substance of your charge. Was it not about this morning?"

"I care not to deny it."

"And had you known the matter as I know it, you would have loved her more for her very indiscretion. You saw her on the quay?"

"Ay, I did so. But what matters? I have neither a right nor wish to know anything now."

"Listen. She was there to favour the flight of some poor gipsy woman who yearns for her children afar off. She told me all this morning, and I rebuked her, but I loved her for it."

"And yet, sir, if she were as innocent as you would have her be, how comes she to be in conversation with Captain Wyndham at so unseemly an hour? and how does she refuse me that explanation in which she can make you believe so

easily? But I thank you, sir; I thank you greatly. I do not feel that admiration for an act of treason which you seem to have. But where I can no longer love, I can at least punish."

"And whom would you punish?" asked his father.

"With whom the guilt lies," answered his son, curtly.

"Captain Wyndham? For surely he alone can break the law who knows it."

"And he alone shall feel the law who broke it," answered the other with compressed lips.

"Fie, Theodore! Would you have the law down on your rival for doing a godly act of mercy; and that because he acted on the noble inspiration of her who needs must fly to others when she sees you unwilling to help and assist her?"

"Call him not my rival," interrupted the youth, who had grown even paler than before; "he is that no longer."

"What is he then?" asked the pastor, who had eyed Theodore with pity.

"He is what I was, or would be."

"He loves her, you mean? But do not you?"

Come, Theodore, let me call her down, and end this most unhappy interview."

"Nay, Herr Pastor, call her not. I would not have her now, for I know now that she loves me not; and——and——"

Hard though his face looked, and fierce, if he had uttered another word he must have broken out into tears.

"My son, I knew this would come!" said the father. "When we betrothed ye to each other as children we prayed to God that He might lead your hearts to love Him and each other. But you have chosen to forsake Him first, and her now. I have seen your jealousy of the Scot increase day by day, and I have watched how fierce and deadly is your hatred. You are my son, and I am bound to love you. But though I love you, I thank God that you shall not marry that sweet maid whom I love as my daughter, for assuredly you would have spoiled her life. Go! Repent of your folly, and think not that you can punish Wyndham so easily. For while you were a-bed the Colonel Rosladin arrived,—he and his valiant friend Duval,—and he is now commander

of the city. Your beloved Holk has no more power than you yourself; and ere you charge the Scot with treason, examine yourself and see that you are not to blame."

The latter part of these words was said as Theodore left the room with a haughty step and an incredulous smile on his lips.

The pastor looked after him with pitying eye, and turning to old Wechter, he said: "I fear, my friend, thou art too hard with him."

"Iron is sharpened by iron," answered the burgher.

"But sharp iron is blunted by it."

Theodore strode out of the house, feeling more lonely and at war with all the world than if he had been a solitary knight amongst innumerable armies of Saracens. He was fully resolved now to force a duel upon the unwilling Scot, in which it would be impossible for one at least to escape. But he was foiled even in that. While walking towards the barracks, where he would have found Wyndham, he met a fellow-officer of the burgher guards who confirmed what he had not before believed, that Rosladin had that morning arrived.

He told him also that in consequence the watches had been altered, and that they must assemble on the Townhall Square within a quarter of an hour.

Scarcely had Theodore time to hurry on his armour, when the bugle called him to duty. And in the evening, as he walked through the town, tired with passion and his work, an ugly whisper went from ear to ear, and people looked at each other in silence, for they dared not tell each other what they feared; but the whisper was this,—“Wallenstein has come!”

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORMING OF STRALSUND.

YES, Wallenstein had come. The stir and bustle in the Imperial camp was caused by the arrival of the great general with the whole of his army and fifty heavy guns. No sooner had he received and dismissed the deputation at Frankfort, than he followed almost at its heels to enforce his answer.

Wyndham was at his usual post at the Franken Gate on that night. The weather was magnificent. The stars shone out with the brilliancy of gems in a robe of sable velvet. Not a breath stirred the leaves, and the mass of water that came lapping and oozing round the jetties and boats was as smooth as the surface of a lake. The heat and silence alike were oppressive. To our captain they were more; they were almost maddening. A peculiar sensation, which he had never before experienced, seemed to inspire him with a sort of physical fear. The knowledge that

danger, perhaps death, was certain to come within twenty-four hours, made the absolute peace of the surroundings doubly painful. He could not bear to be in the company of the junior officers in the guard-house, who were eagerly discussing the probable current of events. His whole body was so sensitive that the least touch sent a thrill of pain through him. He rose and stepped out upon the quay, but the monotony of the sentry's step irritated him. He longed to fly where nothing could disturb him,—where even the hopes and fears that now divided his heart would be silenced, and where the incessant chasing of one wild thought after another might cease for one moment to oppress his soul with gloom or to elevate it with an ecstasy of delight. He turned towards the Holy-Ghost bastion, where there was the smallest chance of his being disturbed, wishing for nothing so much as to be alone with his thoughts. He had not taken many steps on the covered way that led to the bastion, when he was stopped by the slight figure of a man whose features in the uncertain light it was impossible to recognise.

"Captain Wyndham, if I am not amiss?" said an authoritative voice in Swedish.

"Colonel Rosladin!" exclaimed Wyndham joyously. "What is your pleasure?"

"To shake you by the hand, sir. I have been informed of your doings, and I am glad to have a word apart with you. Let us to the guard-house."

A few steps brought them to the guard-house, and into the room where about a dozen officers were congregated, refreshing themselves with wine. The appearance of the close-knit, hard-grained, weather-beaten little man, whose dark eyes regarded them with such authority, caused them to rise in silence.

"I would advise such of the officers as are not on duty to retire and betake themselves to rest for awhile; they will need all they can get," said Rosladin. "And those who are on duty will go to their respective posts."

"And now," said the new commander, when they were alone, "what of the town? Know you the number of inhabitants, and the garrison that we can depend on in the event of a storm?"

"The inhabitants number eighteen thousand," answered Wyndham; "and in urgent case of

need, I think we might reckon on eight thousand men capable of defence, including the three thousand Danes and Swedes. I feel as if the urgency is not far off."

"Ay, captain, I shall not be surprised if Friedland storms to-morrow at all the three gates. He has not come for nothing."

The assurance was almost a pleasure to Wyndham. There was now, at any rate, a probable end to his feverish suspense and the strange anxiety that oppressed him.

"And I am told there is great scarcity in the city," said the colonel. "If it be so, and if no help or provision can come to us, it is scarce worth our while to fight."

"I know not that our provisions are scarce as yet," answered Wyndham; "but I fear they will become so, for even your ships brought us but little, if you consider the hungry mouths it has to feed."

"And for that little you have to thank Banner, to whom your possible want occurred at the last moment, or rather General Leslie, who sent a special message to Banner to remind him."

"I confess I am somewhat surprised," said Wyndham, "that the king has not sent a larger force. Methought, now that his war with Poland is over, and he knoweth the sore stress of this town, he might have sent us greater help."

"So thought I, Herr Captain," answered Rosladin; "but it almost seems to me as if the king were in dubious mind about sustaining this siege; his counsels being at war 'twixt open rupture which must follow, and the abandonment of such an undertaking."

"But now that we are here, let us keep it for him," said Wyndham; "and I beseech you, colonel, order me to double the guards at the gates, for I feel as though, even at this hour, they are preparing a bloody onslaught. There's that within me that tells me there is danger near; and my soul, like the sea-gull at the approach of a storm, flutters and trembles within me."

"Come, let us visit the works; and, as we go, tell me the whole tale of that curious dispute between the Danish and Swedish soldiers. They say that Colonel Holk intended treason; but I

do not believe it, for he resigned the command to me with such fair and honourable mien, that were this true he must be a sad hypocrite. Come, the night is fine, and let us hope it is the herald of a finer day."

Towards the morning, when the light of the stars began to fade, and by degrees the different objects started into sight in the grey dawn, it became unmistakably evident that the Imperials were making preparations of some sort. The sound of their drums and trumpets was distinctly heard at the gate, and Wyndham immediately despatched an orderly for reinforcements. The message had scarcely been delivered to Rosladin, when another arrived from the Knipes Gate and another from the Tribsee Gate, requesting help in all haste. For some moments the officers—Rosladin, Duval, Holk, and Hamilton—had a consultation together, then the last three hurried away in different directions. In a few moments the whole city was up and doing. Not many eyes had been closed that night in heavy sleep, and many a bed had been unoccupied; for the whisper, "Wallenstein has come!"

had been repeated at every door, and had driven slumber away. At the first notes of the bugle, every door opened as if by magic, and burghers and musketeers ran out into the cool morning air. They passed each other with a cordial salute; all differences were now forgotten, all petty jealousy and strife swept away before the approaching shadow of the dark wings of the angel of death.

The engagement commenced at the Knipes Gate, where Rosladin himself commanded, shrewdly guessing that here Wallenstein would be present in person. The outworks of both the Knipes and Franken Gates had been seriously damaged by the Imperial fire. Large breaches had been made in the walls; the cannon were disabled. The guns of the enemy, posted during the night, completely swept part of the approach from the gates to the outer bastions; the outer bastions themselves were almost like an open battle-field, to be defended by dogged courage, and by that alone.

With a ringing cheer the Imperial musketeers advanced towards the breach. They were

greeted with a volley from the burgher guard, to whom the honour of defending their own walls had been given. But the waves of the advancing tide are no more indifferent to the faint summer breeze than were these veterans to that volley. On they came in an irregular line, eager faces crushing in between glistening swords and helmets. A second volley seemed to give them a new impulse. There is blood, there is plunder to be had. On, ye men of Friedland! See! the burghers waver! they retreat! they are in disorder! they fly! Hurrah! the bastion is yours!

Then the close-knit little figure of Rosladin pointed with his sword to the mass of retreating burghers; and turning to the Danes and Swedes behind him, commanded—Forward! It was murderous, that meeting of two tried bodies of soldiers; but it was short. The Imperials, after a few minutes' desperate conflict, fled as fast as they could. Their dead and wounded were thrown aside; a fresh force sent forward; a moment's breathing time allowed; and on came another regiment, as wild, nay, wilder, than the first. Six times the bastion was

taken ; six times it was recovered. The sea-water in the fosse was dyed red with blood. Heaps of mangled corpses lay everywhere, blocking up the very breach, their distorted faces staring up at heaven with dreadful glassy eyes. The duke himself looked at the scene from afar with folded arms and stern unmovable face.

When for the sixth time the attack was repulsed, he countermanded the storm and went to breakfast. What were a thousand lives to him ?

At the Tribsee Gate scarcely anything had been done. At the Franken Gate the same success had attended those of the city ; but our story here has to record details. The command of the defence had been given to Holk. It was carried on with the same intrepidity, but somehow the garrison had grown disheartened by a report that the enemy was already in the city, and would soon attack them in the rear. They flagged. A mad rush was made by Arnheim's dragoons. Presently a cry broke from those who had been engaged in the last attack, and who had been for a time withdrawn.

Arnheim's colours waved on the bastion. Wyndham looked round with a strange tremor.

"It is all over with us, Harry," whispered Baverley, behind him, "unless we be mettlesome. These burghers know not how to keep ground."

"Captain Wyndham, forward!" cried an adjutant from Holk. With delight the Scots rushed after their captain. Even in that terrible moment some raillery passed between them and the rear ranks of the burghers.

In the foremost rank, fighting against fearful odds with a fierceness that astonished Arnheim's veterans, was a young officer of the burgher guard. Already wounded in several places, his clenched teeth betrayed his determination to die rather than yield. Forced by the masses of dragoons to retreat, he threw a hasty glance backwards, and his face almost touched Wyndham's. A deep flush overspread his dark features, and with renewed vigour he turned towards the enemy. They were no match for the torrent-like rush of the Scots, whose Highland war-cries sounded above the clatter of arms.

"The standard! the standard!" was the cry. The Arnheimers were literally crushed back through the breach. Two hands, that had fought side by side, were laid on the standard at the same moment. Wyndham, in acknowledgment of his rival's rare valour, loosened his hold, but was suddenly struck, and fell senseless to the ground. His faithful Roger, also wounded and scarcely able to walk, dragged him out of the crush to a place of comparative safety, then dropped down himself by the body of his master. At that moment the sun rose majestically out of the sea, as if to greet the victorious city.

CHAPTER XIII.

WALLENSTEIN'S CAMP.

THE sun was rising slowly in the cloudless sky, and its rays were reflected by the dazzling arms of a regiment of infantry that stood drawn up in the Imperial camp, so as to form a passage to the capacious tent from whence the Duke of Friedland issued his orders. It was a gay scene, this camp, at least to the superficial observer. The straight rows of white tents, with their streamers and bannerets, the different groups of soldiers in all sorts of undress, chatting together while enjoying their morning meal, cleaning their arms, or cooking their food, the merry, or rather boisterous laughter, the neighing horses, the splendidly-equipped officers who rode or walked about,—all this, in contrast with the dark foliage and darker stems of the trees in the midst of which the camp was pitched, made up a scene at once imposing and beautiful. And yet there was in the midst of this brightness much that was dark. Look at these gay and laughing fellows, by whose lips the

holiest names are profaned in heedlessness or bravado. Is there not a shade of sadness in those eyes, and do not those lips that laugh now, twitch in an unguarded moment, as if in pain? If you followed that man's thoughts, you would find that the little heart left to him was well-nigh breaking over the loss of some dear friend slain in yesterday's encounter. Look at another. He has no sadness on his features; they express nothing but brutal contentment as he eyes the cup of wine with the look of a drunkard, and chuckles over the terrible blasphemies uttered by a neighbour. Observe a third. A whole history of dark crimes and wickedness lies in that face: it is a page full of revelations, one line of which would be enough to make the angels weep.

Indeed, when looking at these men, one could not help thinking that the cause cannot have been very good or noble which drew so many to its standard whose very features spoke of a bad and lawless character. Some regiments, it is true, made an exception, composed as they were of young men of good families, their servants and dependants, who, inspired by religious zeal and

ambition to follow so victorious a general as Friedland, had exchanged their parental house for the camp. But, on the whole, Wallenstein's army was composed of the scum of Germany. Robbers, murderers, thieves, deserters, heathens—everything—found a ready place there; and as long as they conformed to his iron discipline, they were at liberty to practise their handicraft as hitherto.

The generalissimo's tent was a magnificent structure in the middle of the camp, under the shade of a large and spreading pine-tree. It was surrounded by a dozen other tents, which seemed to form a little camp by themselves, for they were inclosed by walls and a ditch, and before its openings or gateways sentries paced up and down with measured steps. At this moment, however, two lines of soldiers were drawn up on each side of the approach, and formed a long and glittering wall towards the city. It was evident that some one was expected. Let us enter the tent and acquaint ourselves with its inmates. They may, perhaps, enlighten us.

The tent was divided into three parts by thick curtains of tapestry. The first and largest com-

partment was very simply and sparingly furnished with a rude table and a few chairs upon the bare floor. The second part presented a great contrast. The ground was covered by a soft carpet ; the sides were hung with dark blue velvet, and the gold tassels, which held up its graceful folds, pleasantly relieved the somewhat sombre colour. A luxurious arm-chair in the middle, and half a dozen costly settees on each side, placed round an oblong table, with inkstands and paper upon it : such was the furniture of the general's private audience-room, where the councils of war were held. But, on lifting the curtains that divided it from the third compartment, the eye was struck by the magnificence and beauty of the duke's private apartment. It was entirely lined with blue and white silk, crimson velvet and gold ; the floor was covered with soft and downy tapestry ; the light was admitted through a rosy curtain, and luxuriant couches were ranged along the sides.

In one corner, at a plain table, upon a wooden chair, and in striking contradistinction to the luxury around him, sat a tall and rather ungainly man. His dress was plain, and yet costly ; red hose

reaching to the long riding-boot, a doublet of dark velvet, with diamonds instead of buttons, and a Spanish collar, was all he wore. A hat with a long red feather lay on the floor beside him. His face was in keeping with his body,—long, bony, and with a sallow complexion. His hair was short, and, like his beard, of a red hue, his eyebrows thick and bristly. But the remarkable parts of his face were his forehead and eyes. His forehead was high and narrow, crossed by many lines, which ruffled and smoothed again with wonderful rapidity, like the changing expression of his eye. A chart of Stralsund lay upon the table before him, and upon his thin lips played a slight smile every time his eyes fell upon it. At last, with a gesture of impatience, he rang a little silver bell on his table. A page appeared.

“Has Count Arnheim not arrived yet?” he asked.

“He is on his way, your excellency,” said a voice behind the curtain of the middle compartment, which was immediately parted, and revealed a man somewhat shorter than Wallenstein, en-

tirely enveloped in a large cloak, and covered with a curious conically-shaped hat. He was of swarthy complexion, and spoke with a foreign accent. "He bade me greet you in his name, and inform you that he will be here almost immediately. And I would not have come with this message had he not asked of me to intercede for him in the case of his favourite servant, whose execution he has delayed, in order once more to plead his life."

Wallenstein had listened but carelessly, and carelessly he answered,—

"The noble count seems to value his servants more than his master. The fellow must die. What news?"

"Pardon me," said the other, "but this man cannot be allowed to die innocently. The crime of which he is charged was never perpetrated by him."

"Enough, my dear Seni," said the duke, with a slight and momentary frown; "he must die, were it alone because I have said so."

The stranger moved a step nearer, and pointing to heaven, said a few words in Italian; when he

continued in German: "And what they said then they say now. Let not the planet lose any of its satellites."

The duke's face had undergone a hardly perceptible change at the words of his astrologer, for such the stranger was. When the latter ceased he was silent for a moment, and then, taking a pen, wrote a few words. "You are right, I think. It is, after all, a small matter to oblige him in. Here is the pardon. And now let him come."

The page here entered, and announced the duke's adjutant, General Teller. The curtain was lifted, and admitted a tall man fully equipped in the dazzling armour of the Hungarian troops. The duke's eye rested on him with satisfaction while he answered the short and pointed questions of his master.

"And here, general, is an order, forbidding the wearing of unnecessary ornaments about the uniform. Have it read and executed. Methinks these officers are becoming somewhat too gaudy."

Teller took the order and read it. Then, as he strode towards the curtain, he seized the

heavy gold chain that dangled over his corselet and to which a small ivory whistle was attached, and tearing it from his shoulder, flung it to the page. The duke eyed him with a smile. The general had touched his weak point. Immediate obedience was in Wallenstein's eyes the soldier's first, almost the only virtue.

"Stay, general," he said, taking a magnificent diamond ring from his finger; "so sudden a loss must be repaired. Rings are not forbidden. Take mine."

The cunning adjutant kissed the liberal hand and withdrew.

A few moments afterwards the Count Arnheim was announced, and a tall, stout, well-built man, of soldier-like appearance, entered at the head of a little group of officers. When arrived before the duke, who remained seated, he made a low bow, saying: "Let me thank your excellency for the life of my heathen. It is the most valuable of all your valuable presents."

"Nor shall it be the last, good count," answered the duke. "What news of the town? Are these burgher-folk coming, or shall we have to fetch them, since it is good that we meet?"

"They are awaiting your pleasure," answered Arnheim, "and may be brought hither in a few moments. But once more, I would submit to you that gentle measures are out of place now. The town is short of provisions, disease is prevalent amongst the garrison, and the iron should be struck while it is hot."

"Nay, good count," said the duke; "but which is easier, to get the thin or the thick end of the wedge in? When once it is in, let us strike by all means. The wind may change at any hour, and the town may receive reinforcement and food. Should we be able, by mild propositions, to gain the town ere this happens, we may save ourselves much trouble. What say you, prince?"

"Your excellency," said the Elector of Brandenburg, in whose territory Stralsund lay, "my judgment may not seem impartial, but I would decidedly advise mild measures. By too much pulling, the bow is broken and the arrow is useless."

"Let them be brought before us," said the duke; and an officer retired to give the order. A few moments afterwards the curtains which divided the first and second compartment were

drawn up, and the space was filled with officers of all regiments who ranged themselves on each side of their chief as he took his seat in the chair at the head of the table with his eyes looking down the immovable rows of soldiers. And woe to the unhappy man in whom those eyes detected a flaw ! He would have had cause to repent ere the day was over.

A roll of the drum and a movement amongst the soldiers now turned the eyes of all in that direction. A group of seven men, preceded by an Imperial officer, strode towards the tent. When arrived before the duke, the party stopped and bowed low, headed by Hasert, the syndic of Stralsund, and behind him Hoyert and Joachim von Braun, the two secretaries.

"These, then, are the deputies from our friends in Stralsund ? " said the duke in as kind a voice as his imperious tones and manner would allow him ; "let them be seated, and let us hear their wish."

At a hint of Teller chairs were brought, and the party sat down. Then Hasert, the syndic, rose, and in eloquent and vivid terms began

describing the state of affairs. It was a sorry sight to see the brethren of one house, the children of one nation, shedding each other's blood ; and if by arbitration such might be prevented, both heaven and earth would ring with joy ; for, as might be supposed, the inhabitants of Stralsund were suffering very severely from want and sickness ; bread was very dear, meat so scarce that none but the wealthy could afford it ; dysentery, fever, and other diseases were reigning both amongst the soldiers and the burghers ; and they prayed, for the love of God, something might be found to stop so great a distress.

There was a silence when the syndic had finished, and his words seemed to have made a deep impression upon the duke. After some moments, looking fixedly at Hasert, he said, in a measured voice, that he was astonished to hear that the inhabitants of Stralsund had been so foolish as to allow matters to go on so far ; that he was greatly pleased to see them before him in a spirit of humility, and that he would gladly forget and pardon whatever had hitherto been done by the town. But upon one thing, and

upon that only, he must insist: the town must admit a garrison, and it must swear allegiance to the Emperor. That was all he wanted, and surely no more reasonable demand could be made. "We do not wish to possess the Danhölz," he concluded; "we do not even wish our soldiers to enter the town. Have your own soldiers; but let them take the oath of fidelity to the Emperor. Your lot is now in your own hands. We have resolved that Stralsund shall belong to the Emperor, even if it were tied with chains to heaven."

The deputies retired, looking at each other in blank astonishment. So kind, so favourable a reception was more than they had dared to hope. At the end of the wood they remounted a wagon which had brought them, and were conducted to the out-works at the Tribsee Gate. Not long afterwards they were seated in the town hall, surrounded by the principal burghers, deliberating on what had been proposed. Many and various were the opinions.

Hasert, who had spoken, gave a detailed account of what had happened, stating as his own

view that these conditions, being far more lenient than he had expected, should be accepted at once. The Danish and Swedish commanders were decidedly against this. They were sure, they said, to receive reinforcement and supply ; whereas if the town were once out of their hands it would be lost for ever.

“For,” said Rosladin, “there are three questions to be answered : How large is this garrison to be ? Who will pay it ? And who will command it ? Do you not see that it is but a trick of theirs ?”

Others, again, contended that much greater loss than they suffered now it would scarcely be possible to suffer. The arrival of reinforcement and supply was very doubtful ; and they had now the opportunity of making peace with an enemy who would be almost certain to perpetrate the greatest cruelties upon them should they fall into his hands after a refusal. The debate upon this question began in the afternoon, but so divided and obstinate were the different parties in their views that the evening fell and night wore on, and morning dawned again ere the disputants dispersed for a little rest.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DUKE'S ADMONITION.

THE following day, about noon, Baverley crossed the garden of the little dwelling, and opened the door of the garden-house, which they had exclusively occupied from the beginning. He entered cautiously, for he believed that his friend was hovering between life and death, but to his utter astonishment he found Wyndham quietly looking at him from his bed ; while Roger, whose wound, although painful, did not prevent the performance of his duties, bustled about the room in attendance upon his master. The honest servant cautioned Baverley to talk but little, nor allow his friend to talk, for the chirurgeon had given strict orders that his patient should be kept without excitement. Baverley promised to follow the instructions, and seated himself by the bedside. But with his usual bluntness he hit upon the only topic that was able to stir the spirits of the wounded man. While looking at the pale cheeks

that had been covered with the bloom of health not many hours ago, he shook his head.

"I knew that he hated you, and that he had a suspicion of your secret love for his mistress; but that his wrath would have dragged him into such vile conduct I had not thought."

"Nay, Master Bayerley," said Roger, discontentedly, "I do beseech you, let us leave this matter alone. Let us think of healing, not of raking up old wounds."

"Well, well, Roger, thou'rt right, no doubt," answered Bayerley, "and I must say no more about it. I marvel whether he is dead?"

"Who?" said Wyndham, fixing his eye upon his friend.

"Who but Theodore, your rival for the standard?" answered Bayerley.

"And why should he be dead? Didst thou not tell me he was safe, Roger, and would come to see me soon?"

"Ay, captain," answered Roger, doggedly.

"Nay, but, good Roger, how can he, when he is in prison?" remonstrated Bayerley.

"He is in a worse place than that," growled

Roger, "and that is the tip of your tongue. Are the records of treason fit meal for so weak a stomach? Look at the captain, say I."

They looked at him. He lay with closed eyes and pale countenance, apparently unconscious. But presently he said slowly, "I had hoped that none but myself knew of this matter, but I find I am wrong. Can ye keep it secret, at least for her sake? For if she knew of it I fear me she would scarcely bear the shock."

"Oh, as for that, there's but little danger of her escaping the secret with Master Baverley near her. She knew it as soon as she saw you, and it seemed to me she bore the shock very well."

Roger watched the invalid from the corner of his eyes, and saw a faint flush spread over his cheeks. Then, to follow up his advantage, he continued, "She bade me tell the whole history on't, and she wept many a tear, and sighed and trembled, and when my tale was done, says she, 'Thank Heaven, that he, at least, is not dead!' which, I take it, was meant for you."

"And you say Theodore is a prisoner? I

know nothing. I saw it in his face. I felt the blow coming, although I saw not the hand that struck it. I knew it ere the fight began; and when we came to the rescue, I saw that he hated me with a deep hatred. But how 'twas done I know not."

"Ay, but Roger saw it; and so, indeed, did I, and many others," said Baverley, somewhat demonstratively. "I saw the dark flush on his cheek, and he crouching together as though he had been a wild beast. And when he saw you bleeding at his feet he gave a great cry, and would have stabbed himself but for Roger, who knocked the sword out of his hand. I know not whether he went of his own will, or whether Arnheim's hussars dragged him on with their standard; but he is nowhere to be found,—not amongst the dead, nor yet the wounded, nor the living,—so he must be with them. I hope they will find him better company than we did."

"May be it will not be long ere we know what became of him," growled Roger; "for we shall soon be all together."

"What now? Is there so great a danger?" asked Wyndham.

"The danger from within is greater than from without," answered Baverley. "What with Rosladin and Holk both wounded, and the scarcity of food, and the people clamouring to give in to the conditions of the duke, I greatly fear the town will be in his hands ere long. They are deliberating in the Rathhaus now——"

He was interrupted in his ill-chosen speech by the movement of his friend, who with a hasty gesture had thrown the covering from his bed and attempted to rise.

"Deliberating in the Rathhaus whether the town is to be sacked or not: and I lie here without raising my voice against it! Come, quick, my hose, Roger, my doublet, my ——"

He sank back on the bed, unconscious, and a deathly pallor overspread his face.

To escape the anger of Roger, who justly reproached him with having brought on this renewal of danger, and in order to find some speedy assistance, Baverley hurried out into the street. He had not got far when one single cannon-shot

boomed over the city. The people in the street paused and looked at each other in blank astonishment. An armistice had been agreed upon until the town had given a definite answer to the duke. The answer had not yet been sent.

"Strange!" they exclaimed. "What betideth now?"

Presently a second shot was fired. Then all was silent. Bayerley resumed his way, framing in his mind some explanation of the strange occurrence; when, as he was within a few yards of the house in which the surgeon was quartered, another shot, deeper, heavier, it almost seemed angrier, than either of the two preceding, shook the little windows of each house. Immediately afterwards there broke over the city a cannonade so ear-deafening, so completely bewildering in its continued roar, that the people ran out of their houses into the street, firmly believing that either half the city had been blown up or that the last day had come. By-and-by, as outburst followed upon outburst, and crash succeeded crash, when falling chimneys and flying tiles threatened

every life in the street, people began to understand what was going on.

Wallenstein, who had expected an immediate answer to his very lenient terms, finding himself disappointed, resolved to give the town a slight sample of his power to hasten the decision. Nor was he long in finding a favourable opportunity to break the armistice. The Tribsee Gate and outworks were defended and guarded by Danish soldiers, and with the cunning of a fox Wallenstein resolved to tempt them into a breach of the armistice. He ordered his miners and sappers to commence working vigorously at the trenches, which order having been executed, soon attracted the attention of the Danes. A blank shot out of their cannon warned the sappers to desist; and when the summons was not responded to, a ball was sent over, which scattered the sand far and wide, and wounded a soldier. This was just what Friedland wanted. He had all his guns ready manned and loaded. The sign was given by one mortar. Then all his cannon began playing upon the unfortunate city for the space of twenty hours. In the public records it is noted

down that over two thousand shots were counted, but this number is probably very far short of the reality.

The alarmed citizens, not knowing whether this was the overture to another and still fiercer assault, flocked in terror to the churches when they could find courage enough to cross the streets which were strewn with bricks, broken windows, chimneys, and cannon-balls, while every house shook with the concussion. Amongst these scenes of terror there were some remarkable instances of preservation. Pastor Hermann, as usual, was ready at his post as soon as the danger began. Many members of his congregation, deeming the church the safest place in such danger, had fled thither in a height of terror, which it cost the good man a deal of trouble somewhat to abate. At last, having calmed their fears, he mounted his little pulpit, and opening the large Bible which lay upon a sort of brass reading-desk, he read words of comfort and consolation to them. In the middle of his words, while his trembling audience took new courage by his very looks, a terrible crash was heard, followed im-

mediately by another, and the pastor was seen to stagger. The whole congregation rose in alarm, but above everything his powerful and exulting voice was heard entreating silence.

"My dear brethren," he said at last, holding up the Bible, "the devil may make a great deal of noise and do a great deal of harm, but he cannot take away this precious book—our main support." It was found on examination that a cannon-ball had entered the church by a window, knocked the desk from under the Bible without removing the book from the pulpit, and had left the church by the opposite window without hurting a single creature.

Later in the day the pastor had still more reason to be thankful for the marvellous preservation of his best friend. Old Herr Wechter, who lay sleeping by the side of his somewhat infirm wife, was also awakened by the fearful noise of the cannonade, and immediately prepared to rise again and appear on duty. The remonstrances of his wife were of no avail. She told him that since he had not been in bed more than two or three hours, let those who had enjoyed

a good night's rest defend the sleeping. But he was inexorable. His conduct, he averred, was noted by every one in the town, and most of all, he added with a grave sadness, since so deep a stain had been cast upon his name. The poor, who were starving, would cry out if they saw him not, and believe they had all the danger in protecting his property. The rich might note his absence and feel inclined to follow it; while Lutheran and Calvinist would blame him alike for sleeping in the hour of danger.

Though tried almost beyond endurance, he rallied his strength and went out. When, after six hours of incessant work, he returned home, his wife met him with tears in her eyes, and silently taking him by the hand, led him to the bed which he had left. What was his astonishment when, on the spot where he had lain, he found a large cannon-ball half buried in the clothes!

CHAPTER XV.

THE CITY IS SAVED.

THE captain's wound proved not very dangerous after all. The treacherous blow from the unfortunate youth had glanced off from the helmet and given him a wound which, though broad, was not very deep. It had, fortunately, bled a good deal. Roger had furiously resisted the surgeon's attempt at further bleeding, and had as good as taken the patient in hand himself, which, as he was a canny Scot, gave the wound a very fair chance of healing.

For the first week it was very delightful to lie under the shadow of the chestnut-tree and receive the visits from his comrades and friends, who kept him fully informed of all that went on in the town and outside it. And it was more delightful still to be tended by that sweetest of all nurses, Helena, whose gentle ways would have reconciled him to a much harder position. After what had happened, it would have been a wonder if these two had left unspoken what their every look and

gesture said aloud. And yet some accident would probably have interposed between them in their mutual reserve and shyness, had not her father, to whom the state of affairs had long been patent, assisted them in his own peculiar way.

There had been a little scene between father and daughter on the morning of the interview between Helena and her lover. When the latter left the house, he so pitied the youth that he resolved to try and reconcile them, if possible ; for the old man was honourable, and would have done all in his power to fulfil his part of the bargain. But when he came to speak to his daughter, he had not the courage to counsel her to marry Theodore. She had no mother, and although her father had endeavoured to fill the blank as much as it is in a man's nature to do, there were moments when his sturdier mind could scarcely comprehend the delicate workings of a maiden's heart. Leaning against his shoulder, she told him with many a half-reluctant sob her whole story : how on the previous night, when she had committed so great an indiscretion, as it appeared to others, the young Englishman's grave yet gentle words of reproach

had shown her the real nobility of his soul. And how that very morning, when she thought Theodore had killed him, her heart had told her that without him life would be blank. After that the honest pastor had not the heart to engraft his little bud on a stem it loved not; and he was relieved from all doubt when he was told of Theodore's deed, that severed him for ever from those who loved him still, but loved him as one who was lost.

For the first week it was delightful to Wyndham to listen to her voice and hear the account of her little adventure on the quay. How she had managed to prepare everything for the poor Irish-woman, and how her heart had beat when they passed the gate alone; how they were almost discovered when the woman jumped into the boat and took the oars; and how thankful and yet ashamed she was when she went to the captain, which, after all, she need not have done; and how the whole was summed up in the assurance that if ever there was a woman that would risk her life for her or her friends, it was the wife of Joe Marks the gipsy. Little did she know that it would soon be proved.

At the beginning of the second week Wyndham began to fret, and sorely wanted to be up and doing. His Swedish and Scotch physicians both refused permission, for although it was a good sign, they deemed it more prudent to let him remain quiet as long as he was not absolutely wanted.

At the end of the week he became rebellious and insisted upon dressing himself. The Swede shook his head ; but the Scot Roger, who knew his master better, shook his head the other way in a very determined fashion, not knowing Swedish, and said, Yes! Wyndham accordingly got up, and was heartily welcomed by all his comrades. The story of the origin of his wound, and the halo of romance about it, had been told by one to another until every one knew it, and his recovery was an event of some interest. Moreover, Helena, one of the few women who had courageously remained when most of her sex fled to Sweden, was greatly loved and admired in the town ; and few could deny that the handsome Scot was better suited to her than the gloomy, unpopular, and haughty young Wechter.

The siege in the meanwhile had not progressed

very actively, as far as fighting went. After the sharp cannonade on the 12th of July, Wallenstein considered it better to let the city have time for deliberation, keeping up a lazy firing to remind them that he was not asleep. He knew that he had an ally within the city that would do and was doing more than all his powder. That ally was starvation !

The weather was provokingly lovely ; not a cloud was to be seen in the sky, not a drop of rain fell. The wells that supplied the besieged began gradually to fail. The reservoirs were stagnant, their water useless. The wind being due south, prevented any ships from approaching the city. The price of every commodity rose rapidly ; luxuries were not to be had ; necessities were paid for in gold. In vain did Wechter and other wealthy citizens open their warehouses to the poor. A pestilence broke out among them that carried many thin, wasting, starving victims to an early grave. The churches were full of people praying for relief. The ministers themselves felt the want as deeply as any one, and were at times unable to fulfil their duty.

With all this, the duke had the sense to keep almost perfectly quiescent. No furious storms, no incessant battering, no houses and magazines on fire, did he allow to intervene between them and their misery. There was nothing to draw their attention away from themselves ; indeed, the soldiers on both sides were fast becoming friends as they walked their sentry-post on each side of the fosse. There were plenty of things the Imperial soldier had,—such as bread and wine and meat. There was only one thing the Stralsunder had, and that he had in unlimited quantities,—tobacco, which was coming into fashion with the Germans. The two sentries, if they were able to understand each other, exchanged civilities and possessions, and talked over the siege, when he without would take care to extol the abundance in the Imperial camp, the pleasant life, and the leniency of the officers. Probably a few hours later they would meet each other in one of the frequent sallies with which Rosladin endeavoured to engage his men, and they would take their chance of killing each other without further thought.

In the meanwhile the Imperial trooper reported

to his captain that the Stralsunder was looking very thin ; and the Stralsunder went home and told his comrades and friends that the besiegers had everything of the best, and that they might have it too, and make the town once more what it was before the siege, if the burgomaster and the rich citizens would only give in. Consequently, night after night stormy meetings were held in the Townhall about the surrender. Negotiations had been commenced once more, Wallenstein this time making his conditions somewhat harder, and insisting upon a sum of money being paid him and the town receiving a garrison of his own soldiers. At the same time his miners and sappers again began to work in the trenches, and his lines were drawing nearer and nearer. The population grew almost furious, and clamoured for consent. The magistrates hesitated, but refused. One thing still inspired them with hope. On the morning of the 22nd of July, a little boat had arrived from the sea, rowed by a single man, from Stockholm. The despatches which he bore were from the king himself, and from his chancellor, and they exhorted those of the city to keep courage, for a fleet with

plenty of provisions and 2,000 men, under General Leslie, was ready to sail as soon as the wind turned.

Thus Sunday, the 23rd of July, was passed; the weather insufferably hot and the sky above them blue and cloudless; the sea a perfect lake; the enemy drawing nearer and nearer.

"This will never last," said Wyndham to his friend, as they both stood on the quay and looked out to sea. "If we have no rain or change of wind within twenty-four hours, we are lost."

The following morning, when they looked out of the window, they found the garden drenched with rain. The wind had changed. The Imperial trenches were converted into heaps of mud, and had been abandoned during the night. In the rain that came pouring down during the next days, Wallenstein broke up his camp, with the exception of the principal batteries occupied by Arnheim's men, and marched his army into Mecklenburg. On the 26th General Leslie arrived with his fleet, amidst the rejoicings of the whole populace.

Although the three gates were still threatened by Arnheim, the people flocked in holiday attire

to the quay and cheered the soldiers as they landed. Booths were erected on the jetties, and provisions given or sold as soon as they arrived. The danger was past, the people had gloriously done their duty ; the famous Wallenstein had been defeated, and the town was as free and as strong as ever.

Amidst this summing up of pleasant things, it is sad to have to record one detail of sorrow that affects our story.

On the 2nd of August, after General Leslie had reviewed the whole of the troops, he repaired to the Franken Gate to inspect the enemy's works, which had by this time been forsaken, Arnheim having withdrawn his troops during the night. It was, however, deemed safer to reconnoitre before trusting to the dangers of a surprise, and Wyndham was commanded to see that all was safe. Eager to be again employed on duty under an officer whom he loved so well, he hurried away at the head of his volunteers to report what was considered a mere matter of fact. Those remaining behind eyed the troops with interest as they disappeared in the trenches, and would sometimes

jump on the top of a rampart. Suddenly, shots and cries were heard ; but ere any one could come to the rescue, half the men were flying back to the city, pursued by Arnheim's cavalry. They reached the city more dead than alive, many of them seriously wounded, and all covered with the disgrace of having left their captain and half their comrades in the enemy's hands.

CHAPTER XVI.

WYNDHAM PRISONER.

IT was but too true. As work after work and trench after trench of the enemy was found forsaken, the reconnoitring party lost some of the caution which should have been observed to the very last. Suddenly turning round the corner of a breastwork, one of the foremost men gave the alarm and sank down pierced with shot. Wyndham immediately called upon his men to stand firm and hold together. It was his intention to retire to one of the abandoned works and defend himself there till help should arrive. Unfortunately, his foot slipped on the soft ground; he fell heavily to the earth, and the force of the fall, together with the effects of his late wound, deprived him of consciousness. His men fell into disorder, a panic ensued, and those who were not killed or wounded fled to the city. The soldiers that were sent to the rescue saw the dragoons gallop away, with the prisoners before them on

their saddles, to where Arnheim's troops were encamped for the night.

When Wyndham opened his eyes it was dark, though a fire close by threw a strange light upon the objects that surrounded it. He lay for some moments perfectly still and saw the stars twinkling above, while a confused din and bustle told him that he was in a camp. As his eyes grew more accustomed to the darkness, he saw the white tents everywhere and the bright fires in the distance, the dark figures which passed before them assuming a fantastic and unearthly shape. Moving very cautiously, so as to attract no attention, he contrived to turn himself round and face the fire already mentioned. It was surrounded by about twenty men, who were drinking, and some of them smoking, while all watched with intense anxiety the steam which arose in circles from a large iron pot hung up on the fire. He could see by the dress that the men belonged to a regiment of dragoons.

"Come, thou lazy dog!" said one of the soldiers with an immense beard, accompanying the words with an oath; "if that supper be not

ready when I have finished my pipe, I shall certainly break thy head."

In answer to this threat a little man, who was walking between the fire and a neighbouring tent, apparently superintending the cooking operations, turned to the first speaker, and began to utter a volley of abuse that made Wyndham shudder. But far from this being the case with the other part of the audience, they laughed and applauded the fellow; and when, having worked himself up to a pitch of excitement, he drew a flaming piece of wood out of the fire and held it before his disconcerted antagonist's face, their mirth knew no bounds. Each had his own joke to fling at the first speaker, and the torrent of riotous and violent language which fell upon Henry's ear at that moment might well have caused him to start had he not already known something of the composition of Wallenstein's army. There was one thing, however, that astonished him most of all. He had heard, or at least he fancied, that English and Scotch words were mixed with the German, and that in more voices than one. He scanned

the several faces of those who sat turned towards him, and he felt sure that there were some of his countrymen amongst them. Resolving, however, to ascertain the truth first, he remained quiet and listened.

"Silence!" shouted the bearded object of their mirth. "We shall have the captain upon us, and then some other regiment will get the post of conveying these prisoners, which little holiday I would not lose for aught."

"Where are they going?" asked several voices.

"O-ho, thou art getting inquisitive!" answered the first speaker.

"I only want to know," said one; "because, if we are going the same way we came, we are more likely to starve than if we remained with the army."

There was a laugh amongst the men. Wallenstein had come to Stralsund from Frankfort, right through the territory of Brandenburg, and his way could be traced by the devastated fields, burned villages, and other tokens of violence committed by his army. The soldier meant that he was afraid so little had been

left, that even they would not be able to keep themselves from starving.

"Don't be afraid," said the bearded one again. "I have not been quartermaster for ten years without knowing what to do. Joseph here can testify that he has never been without something wherewithal to make a supper, if he would only make it."

"Ay," said the little fellow, stirring the contents of the pot, "he's right there. He's the best quartermaster I wot of. He's the best actor, I believe, that ever was born. You should have seen one day how he played the prodigal son, and got the fatted calf indeed."

"Tell us, tell us," cried several voices at once.

"Well," quoth the quartermaster, stroking his beard," since we are not likely to get our supper at all, I had better keep my mouth engaged on something. Before I served the duke, I served my lord of Bavaria, a sorry scoundrel like myself and all of us. We betook ourselves to Bohemia, with orders, forsooth, to protect the inhabitants. Never were protectors so bitterly thanked as were we. And

methinks not undeservedly at times, for we plagued them sorely, so that anon a heap of armed peasants would pounce upon us and fight with scythe and bill-hook right bloodily, and oft drive us and ours before them.

“But it passed one day that we came upon a village called Luttig, wherein the peasants had armed themselves with matchlock and crossbow, and as they looked doughty men it seemed a dangerous thing to annoy them, and we passed on. But, lo! while we were yet grumbling with disappointment, we came upon a little church with a house beside it, standing by itself a little way out of the village. It suddenly occurred to me that this must be the house of an old comrade of mine who was killed, and whose name was Franz Zecker. I promptly hid my men in a little wood hard by, and knocking at the door, asked in a trembling voice, whether Franz Zecker lived there. They answered that he did. I entered, and made them believe that I was their runaway son; for, mark you, I was wondrous like him, both being as it were very handsome men, and I had not forgotten Franz’s

tale. Heigho ! I got all I wanted, I warrant you ; and, after supper, when they had all gone to bed, I oped the house to the other men and let them in. And we put sentinels to the several doors, and threatened to shoot them if they stirred. And then we cleared the house of bread, meat, bacon, money, beer, and loaded our horses. But the servant-wench had contrived to drop herself out of the window, and had run to the village, which was about six or seven furlongs off, and we had great difficulty in getting clear of our pursuers, for we were overburdened with booty. The very hags came running out with scythes and pitchforks to kill us. But they had some reason to stay behind, too, for we had set fire to the old church, and we could see it flaring up behind us for miles. We have had many a good laugh over the affair since then."

Such acts of treachery, the mere recital of which is distasteful to modern ears, were too common in those days. The maxim that nothing is unlawful in war demoralized the common soldiery, and was held to justify the

wildest excesses. In Wallenstein's army were some of the greatest ruffians in Europe, and no true picture of the times can wholly ignore these scenes.

"God forgive them their sins!" said a deep and earnest voice in German, close to Wyndham's ear, when the bearded monster had finished his tale with apparent satisfaction. He turned his head towards the side from whence these sounds came, and saw about two yards away from him several men in a sitting or lying position, some dressed as soldiers, others as civilians. The person who had apparently spoken the last words was, to judge by his dress, a Protestant clergyman. His grave and expressive face betokened at that moment a height of indignation and horror which well accorded with the feelings the fellow's tale had originated in his own breast.

"Hallo!" said one of the soldiers nearest to Wyndham and who had heard the exclamation; "is our parson speaking again? What were you pleased to remark, Sir Longsermon?" he said, turning with mock politeness to the prisoner.

"I prayed that God might forgive all of you for taking part in such deeds or listening to such blasphemous language," said the undaunted man, in a firm voice.

"Blasphemous language!" cried the quartermaster, across the fire. "I would advise thee, my good sir, to hold thy tongue, unless thou wantest to be roasted on this fire. I desire no comments whatever on my language."

"My good friend," answered the prisoner, in a clear tone, "I earnestly beg of you to mend your ways while there is yet time."

The enraged quartermaster was in no mood for serious remonstrance. He frowned as he eyed the prisoner, who sat looking at the troop with a smile of pity upon his face.

"Look you, parson," he said at last, in a short and threatening tone, "we have had trouble enough with thee already. We want none of thy sermons; and if thou holdest not thy tongue I shall put the chains and screw-thumbs on to thee;" and he accompanied his threat with a significant look.

"Nay," said the preacher, calmly, "ye would

not have me be a coward, would you? When you see the enemy, do you put up your sword and fly, or do you draw it and fight as long as you can? Now, within you I perceive the arch-enemy, the destroyer of all life, who standeth between you and a merciful but a just God." He was proceeding in a strain of earnest expostulation, but before he could utter another word the quartermaster jumped up in furious anger, and stepping round the fire he would have done the intrepid servant of Christ some grievous harm but for a fortunate circumstance. We have mentioned that Wyndham thought he had caught some English words amidst the confusion of tongues. At this moment his doubt became certainty.

As the ruffian was making his way to the prisoners, and those around the fires turned in that direction to see what he was going to do, the figure of a vagabond, which Harry had noticed some time previous, stepped in his way, and said in a rich Irish brogue, "Come, now, captain, why not hold your tongue, and tell us another story, instead of striking a poor

defenceless parson? Here, I have something to tell you; listen!"

The quartermaster stopped and inclined his ear to the gipsy's lips. His face lit up with a smile of pleasure; and apparently forgetting all about the parson, he slapped the gipsy on the back, and exclaimed joyously, "Wilt swear to that! Nine in the orbit?"

"I saw it myself," whispered the gipsy; "and so may your honour."

"Then I am off," cried the quartermaster, and ran away hastily.

This little scene had engaged the attention of those round the fire, and at the departure of the quartermaster the gipsy was called to the group and overwhelmed with questions.

"What is nine in the orbit, thou old deceiver?" cried one; "canst not make it ten for me, and I'll give thee a gold-piece?"

"That would do your honour no good," answered the vagabond, shaking his head mysteriously. "I cannot disclose my secrets to the uninitiated; but give me half a gold-piece, and I will tell you your fortune."

"Half a gold-piece!" cried another. "No wonder you fellows get rich. Here, Franz, I will tell you your fortune for less than that. I dare say I know as much about it as he does."

"Rich!" said the gipsy, shrugging his shoulders and pointing to his ragged clothes; "is this wealth? Even when we do happen to earn a few pieces, you steal them from us again. But I accept your offer, Herreke. Here is my hand, and if you can read my fortune I promise you half a gold-piece."

The soldier, taken at his word, had to confess his ignorance, and consented to have his own hand examined for a few kreutzers. One after the other now crowded round the gipsy and offered his hand. At last, when they had all been satisfied, he asked in a supplicating voice: "Will you also allow me to try the prisoners, Herreke?"

"Thou wilt be a clever fellow if thou canst find a single kreutzer upon them," said a soldier, "we took good care of that."

"A poor man knows what a poor man wants," answered the heathen; "the heavier a man's misfortune the greater his anxiety to know his

fate ; and if they do not pay me now, they may some other day fourfold. A grateful debtor is often worth more than a reluctant customer."

He now addressed himself to the prisoners, some of whom refused his counsel, while others eagerly accepted it. When he came round to Harry, he looked at his hand and said, "So young, so noble, so unfortunate ! Surely the stars have something better for you in store ?"

"Do you know Joe Marks ?" whispered Harry, in English.

The gipsy's hand trembled slightly, and he cast a searching and distrustful glance at Harry. "And what if I did ?" he asked.

"Tell him that you found me in this condition, and that I asked you to remind him of the Dan-hölm. My name is Captain Wyndham."

"He is in the duke's army at present," whispered the gipsy, "in the astrologer's service ; but I shall not fail to tell him when I see him. You may be sure——"

"What is that thou art saying to the prisoner ?" broke in the voice of the quartermaster, who had returned from his errand. "No secret dealing here, or——"

"Nay, captain," said the gipsy, turning round as he felt the soldier's hand on his neck; "was it not nine now? I am sure it was nine; and do not kill your benefactor entirely. But I have a word with your honour."

And drawing him apart, the gipsy spoke a few words in a low voice to the soldier. The way in which they looked at Harry convinced him that he was the subject of their conversation; and the respectful manner in which the quartermaster afterwards treated him, made it not unlikely that the gipsy had prophesied things which caused the soldier to look upon him as one to be respected rather than injured.

Thanks to the Irish quartermaster, they received some supper. Most of the soldiers round the fire had now wrapped themselves in their cloaks and gone to sleep; and following their example, Harry stretched himself out by the side of his new companion, and was soon forgetful of all his troubles.

CHAPTER XVII.

TEMPTED IN VAIN.

THE next morning Wyndham awoke at the sound of the bugle, and found his companions already awake. Rubbing his eyes, he looked around him for some time in blank astonishment. He had been dreaming about Stralsund and his wedding ; but now he found himself sitting on a horse-rug surrounded by soldiers who were washing and dressing, while behind him eight or nine other men were lying on the ground chained together by the legs. Every face, every object was new and strange, and it was some time before the truth dawned upon him. At last he was recalled by his neighbour's voice.

"How is your head this morning, Herr Scotsman ?" asked the parson.

Wyndham brought his hand to his head, and became aware that it was bandaged again. "I knew not the old wound had opened," he said ; "but pray tell me, how did I come here ?"

"You were brought here last night by this troop of dragoons with five other soldiers, but you alone were insensible, and I thought you would die, you looked so pale ; but we may thank the Lord now for His kindness in sparing you. I do not know you, but I feel a great interest in you."

Wyndham was about to reply when a soldier came up to them, touching his cap. He was a tall, well-made fellow with an honest face, upon which there reigned a somewhat wild and sad expression. He addressed Wyndham in English, and informed him that he had been sent by the quartermaster, and was glad to see him so much better.

"Do you think you'll be able to ride a horse to-day?" he asked ; and on receiving a confirmative answer, continued : "We have orders to take you both to head-quarters. I suppose," he added, with simplicity, "there's something important about ye that the generalissimo wants to find out."

"Indeed," thought Harry, "I am going to see Wallenstein too, then." The recollection of what he had just lost brought him into a very sad and dejected mood, which could be chased away neither by the parson's attempt at conversation

nor by the Irishman's civility, who evidently looked upon Harry as a soldier of importance, as his dress and accoutrements—very much better and costlier than those of poorer officers of the same rank—did not contradict what the gipsy had prophesied.

They had but little opportunity to converse, for after a hasty breakfast of coarse bread and beer an officer commanded the men to mount ; and two horses having been brought for Harry and the parson, they were each surrounded by some dozen dragoons, and were soon on their way in a sharp trot to the camp of the generalissimo.

The officer who commanded the little party rode for some time beside Wyndham, and began a conversation with him about the war, the Swedes, Gustavus Adolphus, and other subjects, evidently desirous to draw him out. But Wyndham perceived the object and skilfully eluded the officer's questions ; or, where that was not possible, either kept silent or gave a positive denial, so that in a little time his interrogator desisted and spoke to him no more during their journey. The country around bore evident signs of having afforded passage

to an army. Deep furrows of wheels, everything round about trampled and crushed by men and beasts, and the fields shorn of what they contained, —such scenes, together with the recollection of his misfortunes, made the prisoner silent and thoughtful.

They halted once for some refreshments at a half-burned village, but immediately proceeded in the same trot, which had been kept up now for about seven hours. The heat became intolerable ; the sun poured down its rays perpendicularly upon the men. The horses were blowing and began to stumble, for they were riding on a heath which was sloping upwards, and the dust was entering their throats and eyes, and caused a general coughing. Suddenly, as they were approaching the ridge of the hill, they saw several heads rising above it, and a horseman approaching them at full speed. The officer commanded the troop to halt, and rode forward. After exchanging a few words with the new comer, he ordered Harry and the parson to follow him. The two prisoners did as they were bid, and soon found themselves in the presence of half a dozen officers magnificently dressed and mounted, and all directing their atten-

tion to a tall thin figure on horseback in their middle. Having glanced over the letter which the officer gave him, the tall man looked at our captain for some moments in silence. "When is the King of Sweden coming over?" he asked, in a short tone.

"I do not know that he *is* coming over, your excellency," answered Wyndham, concluding that he spoke to the generalissimo.

"Have you ever seen him?"

"Often."

"Is he a great general in the field?"

"He is a great man everywhere," answered Wyndham undauntedly.

Wallenstein frowned, and his eyes flashed with anger. There was something in them as they shone from under his bushy eyebrows that made one feel awe-struck. Wallenstein continued,—
"What rank have you in the Swedish army?"

"Captain," answered Harry.

"Have you spoken with the king?"

"I have."

"And with Oxenstierna?"

"Often."

"What is the strength of his army?"

"I do not know."

"Take care," said the generalissimo; and again his eyes flashed. But Wyndham felt that he could give no other answer.

"Answer me this question, and you will have cause to thank me; or else, beware," continued Wallenstein. "What is the strength of his regiments?"

"Your excellency," said Wyndham in a modest but firm tone, "your mind is too noble to require a true soldier to betray whatever secrets he knows of his master and king."

"Answer my question, sirrah," thundered the duke, "and speak the truth, for your life. Once more, What is the strength of the Swedish regiments?"

"I do not know," answered Harry calmly. "It is some time since I left Sweden, and I hear that great alterations have taken place in the army, of which I know no details."

"You lie, villain!" cried the duke; and, raising the heavy riding-whip in his hand, he would have struck Wyndham a severe blow; but the excitement

and the day's fatigue were too much for the young Scot's nerves. He became giddy, the colour left his cheeks, and he fell back in the arms of his guide. The duke eyed the insensible youth for a moment with a cold, cruel look, and turned his horse in the opposite direction.

When Wyndham awoke out of his swoon, he found himself in bed in a small room and two men seated by his side, to whom apparently his recovery gave much satisfaction. But great was his astonishment when he was accosted by one of them in English.

"You feel well now, I hope, captain?" he said, with a broad grin.

Harry thanked him, and said he felt much better.

"Well, ye ken," said the other man, apparently a kind of surgeon, and decidedly a Scotchman, "it was'na verra wise to talk till the duke in sic a fashion. Ony man would faint away after doing that."

Harry expressed his sorrow for having done anything wrong, and asked politely whether he might know with whom he had the honour of speaking. The officer then made himself known

as Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon. The surgeon having withdrawn, he began to chat very pleasantly with his prisoner, who had in the meanwhile risen. He ordered refreshments to be brought, and when a really sumptuous repast made its appearance, Wyndham was not slow in doing it ample justice. It struck him, however, that Gordon pressed him rather too frequently to take wine. No doubt the quality of it was excellent, and the Scot seemed so glad to see a countryman, that it appeared almost natural. But he recollected the attempts of his custodian that morning. His suspicion having been once aroused, he declined to take any more wine, and was very cautious in his answers. Ere long his suspicions became verified. After some vain attempts to lead him into a conversation about the state of affairs, Gordon began holding forth on the advantages, splendid prospects, fine pay,—and indeed to judge by his costly dress his pay must have been very high,—speedy rise, and jolly life in Wallenstein's army; to all of which Harry listened with the greatest possible humour, for he knew what was coming, and had made up his mind long ago.

At last Gordon came out with his offer,—Would he take service under Wallenstein? He would get the command of a regiment at once, and the rank of lieutenant-colonel, with good pay. Harry refused at once and decidedly. Gordon tried everything, but in vain, and after an hour's conversation he left Harry in a towering passion. In the evening Gordon returned and renewed his attack, making even more tempting offers than before. But Wyndham found it now comparatively easy to refuse, and would at last give no answer.

"Well, sir," said Gordon at last, angrily, "if you refuse these offers, I warn you that it will go badly with you."

"I cannot help that, colonel," answered Harry calmly. "I know I would not have a moment's rest if I should thus forsake my cause and my principles."

"Pooh! I thought so too once; but I found out that the victorious cause is the true one."

"Well, then, there is this difference between us," said Harry, "that I serve the King of Sweden because I admire him and love to further his cause; and you, sir, I am afraid, serve the duke

because you admire and love yourself, and consider your own cause the only important one.”

Gordon bit his lips on hearing words which later events proved to be strictly true,* and left the room in a rage, slamming the door behind him. The apartment in which he was lodged received its light through one window near the roof, and looked into another room. Consequently, as it soon became dark, he found it wise to go to bed again, and was soon in a peaceful slumber. He was awakened the next morning at the break of day by the same officer who had conveyed him to the camp, and who desired him in curt tones to rise, partake of some food, and follow him. The repast of the previous day had been removed, and the coarse bread and beer of the camp substituted. The brief meal over, they soon arrived at what must have been the yard of the farm-house, where he found the same troop of men that had accompanied him the day before, amongst whom, to his

* Gordon was one of the principal actors in the sad tragedy of Wallenstein's death. He, General Butler, and others, agreed to execute their benefactor for the sake of advancement and gain.

inexpressible grief, he perceived the parson already mounted, and smiling and nodding at him as if they were going on a pleasure trip.

The farm-house was situated on the slope of the hill; and as the troop issued out of the yard, the magnificent sight of the camp in the valley, stretching along in the distance and coloured by the rays of the rising sun, burst upon them. The white tents, the glittering arms, flags, guns, and horses, the dark heath, the rosy sky,—it was indeed a beautiful and imposing spectacle, at once so peaceful and so pure, and it required a strong imagination to realize that *there* lay the scourge, the curse of Germany.

Leaving the camp on the right, the party set off at a sharp trot in a southern direction, and for three hours not a word was spoken, which, as the road went over barren heath and sand, was not to be wondered at.

At the first halt, however, after the men had partaken of some beer or wine, they became more communicative, and the greater the distance from the army became, the slacker did the officer hold the reins of discipline. Riding behind with the

quartermaster, he left the men to crack their jokes amongst themselves, which soon resulted in the two prisoners riding side by side.

"Let us be cheerful, my friend," said the minister, as soon as they were together; "we shall yet find a way out of these misfortunes."

"I do not know about that," said their acquaintance, the Irishman, who seemed to like their company; "you are going to a place that is bad enough. Did you ever hear of Templin?"

Harry looked in bewilderment at the speaker, and a sudden terror smote him. The fearful things which he had heard of that place filled him with dismay; and, almost breathless, he asked, "Are we going thither?"

The soldier nodded, and added in a sympathizing tone, "Never mind, captain; it is not so bad as it looks. I have been in a prison of war half a dozen times, I think, and I rather like it for a change. Besides, you know, this war cannot last for ever."

"That is but a poor consolation," said the parson; "I know a better one. I have read of one man who was locked up in as strong a prison as

Templin, and chained to soldiers too, but he was helped out, notwithstanding all that."

"Ah," said the Irishman to Harry, in his native tongue, "he's talking of St. Patrick."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PRISON FORTRESS.

IN the territory of Brandenburg, and on the borders of Lake Templin, the sombre and massive walls of a strong castle rose abruptly out of the tranquil waters. Built upon a promontory, it was on all sides surrounded by the unfathomable lake, and the only means of access lay through the heavy iron doors, upon the fortification of which the architect had brought to bear all the resources of his profession. The space inclosed by the walls was laid out partly as kitchen-garden, partly as stone-yard, and each day of the monotonous year a troop of silent and listless men might be seen engaged in laborious work as they performed the duties of the common ploughman, or, what was worse still, the heavy task of breaking and quarrying the stone that was to fortify their prison. Dispersed through the various groups were hard-featured and rough-handed overseers, whose ejaculations when inciting the prisoners to harder

work, and the monotonous calls of the sentries were the only sounds that broke the silence of that sombre abode.

Somewhat livelier were the environs of the guard-house. There the soldiers not on duty amused themselves with cards, dice, and drink; there oaths and blasphemy, levity and wantonness reigned supreme, and not a thought of pity was bestowed on the unhappy objects of their care. The principal building, which was occupied by the dwellings of the officers of the garrison, the arsenal, the cells of the prisoners, and the sick rooms, was a large, square block, with a verandah running round it. Every point within the fortress might be seen at a glance from this elevated position; and here the commander of Templin was at this moment pacing up and down, throwing ever and anon a searching look around him.

It seemed that something disturbed him, for he turned frequently to that part of the verandah which was nearest the guard-house, and from which subdued sounds of merriment proceeded. At last, when a chorus of laughter reached his ears, he frowned, and in a sharp and irritated voice

called "Carolo." A young page appeared, and waited to be addressed.

"Go to the captain of the guard and ascertain what is the origin of the loud merriment I hear. Have I not told him frequently that I will not allow brawls and drunken revelry within these walls?"

The page sped on his errand and returned in haste, reporting that it was no drunkenness, but that Wanza, the gipsy, had again arrived with his goods, and that he was exposing them for sale to the soldiers.

"What! Wanza here again?" said the commander of the fortress, stamping with his foot. "Ha! has he forgotten our promise last time? We shall teach him to palm his forged goods on honest people, and enter these walls against our express command. Have him brought hither, Carolo, and silence those loud-mouthed fools."

Carolo, expecting a good scene, flew to the guard-house, and ere long the gipsy was conducted between two soldiers to the commander, who met them at the entrance of the building. Had Wyndham been present he would have had no

difficulty in recognising the features of the fortune-teller who came so opportunely to his help in the camp. He assumed a look of great humility before the commander, but a cunning glance from under his eyelashes showed that he was tolerably at his ease.

"What now, impudent heathen!" said the commander, frowning, "you seem to have forgotten my command; I therefore mean to teach you beyond the possibility of forgetting. You must leave this castle within an hour, but I will have both thine ears cut off to remind thee for ever of that lesson, 'Ye that have ears, hear.' What say you to that?"

"If such be my fate, your grace, I have nought to say," answered the gipsy in humble tone.

"And know you not your own fate, most wise prophet," said the commander in mocking tone, "who profess to read other people's?"

"We cannot read our own stars, and——"

"Nor those of others. Lead him away."

"One humble word, your grace. Have not my prophecies come true? Did I not see two flames that first were one? And when they separated,

one grew bright and lucid, but was at last suddenly extinguished ; while the other became smaller and enveloped by a cloud, but ultimately brightened and attained a greater brilliancy than the first. And how is this, your grace ? How is this ? Where is the brighter flame ? Where is the brilliant fire of *his* life ?”

The commander made a step forward and turned pale. His eyes fixed on those of the gipsy, he faltered, “What say you there ? Is Salzbach then no more ? What of him ? Speak !”

“These ears have heard his last sigh, your grace, not more than three days ago ; he was shot in a duel with Count von Zoger, and thus is the flame extinguished all too soon. But beware, your grace, for now the cloud will envelop the second flame, and if not heeded, that will be extinguished too. Soldiers, lead me away ; I have done my duty.”

“Stay !” said the commander curtly ; and turning to the soldiers and the page, “Begone ! leave me alone with this man.”

The officer then entered the building, and opening the door of a room motioned the gipsy to

follow him. It was a richly-furnished apartment, hung round with tapestry. After having paced the room for some time, he paused before the vagabond, whose demeanour was if anything still more humble than hitherto.

"Wanza, I have not much faith in thy prophecies; but one thing has come true, and another, thou sayest, has just been fulfilled. Play not with me, or assuredly I shall make thy carcase game for the gallows. What is this cloud that is coming—that has come over me? Explain, and thou art free."

A momentary flash of pleasure lit up the gipsy's face; but he shrugged his shoulders, and said in plaintive tones, "Have mercy, your grace. I cannot command the mysterious powers that have been given me; I can use them when they come,—that is all. I may be able to explain, but promise me a free exit, else I would rather surrender at once than risk your anger by a failure."

"Thou art safe; but proceed," said the commander impatiently.

The gipsy stepped to the large chimney, where

a logwood fire was still smouldering. With a touch of his foot he stirred the blocks, and threw something into the flame which made it shoot up and burn brightly. Then, having asked for some salt, he threw a handful of it in the flames, and gazed long and intently at mysterious figures described by the smoke. At last he turned round and seized the hand of the commander, who had watched him with suspended breath.

"You are right, your grace, the cloud has come ; the hour of danger, of watchfulness, has arrived. Your life is again mixed up with another's. Is he harmed, then you must suffer ; does he die, then so must you ; does he live, then so shall you. I see seven circles : those are seven years. During that time his life is your life, his body is your body, his health your health. And here," pointing to his hand, "I see a W ; that is his name. His dress is foreign—it is that of a Scot. He is coming—I see him—" he paused.

Here the flame in the chimney shot up high and disappeared. The gipsy's face, for a moment alive with a strange expression, assumed its ordinary look of cunning and humility. The com-

mander gazed with grave looks at the glowing embers on the hearth, and became absorbed in deep thought. When he looked up from his reverie, the gipsy had left the room and the castle.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE STRANGE PHYSICIAN.

ALTHOUGH the commander was superstitious, and put some faith in the gipsy's words, it was still with considerable surprise that he received intelligence the same evening that two prisoners were to be brought to the castle; and found on their arrival the next day that one of them was a foreigner, a Scot, and that his name actually did commence with a W. Unacquainted with the peculiar circumstances which had inspired Wanza's prophecy, he felt strangely attracted towards our hero. "If it be true," he mused, "that his life, health, and welfare are intimately connected with mine, then common prudence bids me take especial care of him." And thus, to his great astonishment, instead of being led to a subterranean cell, or doomed to spend his days in hard and unhealthy labour, Wyndham found himself reserved for the governor's own use. He was kept a prisoner, it is true, but

without having to experience any great hardships. He slept in a good cell, he was fed from the governor's own table, and his work in the day-time consisted in preparing those few records and books which the Imperial decree compelled that officer to keep. He was treated with the utmost deference, and the governor himself offered him the use of his library.

It may be supposed that Harry, though entirely at a loss to comprehend the reason of this treatment, was nevertheless very thankful for it, and looked upon it as a special act of Providence.

It would be both useless and tedious to follow Wyndham in his imprisonment. There was absolutely no variety in his life, there was no incident that would be worth while recording. News from the outside world there was none. Whether the Imperial forces had again surrounded Stralsund and been successful in subduing it; whether those whom he loved were still alive and thinking of him; or whether they had fallen by the cruel hand of war,—these and a thousand other questions started up in his busy brain, and tormented him each weary day.

But when he glanced from his own condition to that of the other prisoners, and saw the signal difference, he was deeply thankful and lost in wonder. The governor remained ever scrupulously anxious about his welfare. He would frequently enter into conversation with his prisoner, and make him tell the story of his life, which, as a sort of recompense, the latter was glad to give. He found his hearer very interested, but surprisingly superstitious on certain points, especially as to the fact of there existing some mysterious connection between them. Not knowing to what use this strange delusion might lead, he did not attempt to controvert it. The governor even supplied him with some English books which he had procured at a great cost, and had he dared he would have allowed him to roam at his ease over the whole castle. The strict discipline, however, limited even his power, and an hour each day in the square was all that was allowed him. Thus week succeeded week, and season followed season, till Wyndham counted two long years, and began to wonder whether he was doomed to spend the rest of his life in this seclusion. But help was near.

One day a peculiar kind of epidemic broke out amongst the prisoners, and in a few cases proved fatal. As soon as this was reported to the governor he seemed in the greatest trouble. His anxiety increased each day, and at last he resolved to send a messenger to the Imperial army, requesting a physician to be sent immediately. One afternoon in September, fully two years having now elapsed since his imprisonment, Wyndham sat in the little room he usually occupied when engaged in his work, when he became aware of an object passing between him and the light. On looking up he saw on the verandah outside the window a tall form, wrapped in a long gown and covered with a strangely-fashioned hood. He had never seen the figure before, and as the face was perfectly unknown to him, he conjectured that it must be the new physician arrived from the Imperial camp. But what was his astonishment when, on passing his window again, the strange visitor made a momentary pause, and putting his fingers to a little hole in one of the many small panes of glass, threw a piece of crumpled parchment into the room and

disappeared. In an instant Harry had seized the parchment and read these words in English, "The governor will visit you shortly. Feign illness."

These few words, with their strange suggestion, little as they told him, made his heart leap. His blood ran wildly through his veins, and his temples throbbed as he read the two short sentences over and over again. Had he a friend in the castle, and that one of his own nation? The door opened and the governor entered on his usual morning visit. At that moment Harry was sitting before the table, his face covered with his hands. As the governor entered he assumed his ordinary position, but he could not hide from the other's watchful eyes his intense excitement. He trembled violently, there was an unusual colour in his cheeks and a sparkle in his eye that might have deceived any one.

"You do not feel well, captain?" said the governor, seizing the youth's hand, his own trembling almost as much. "We must get the physician to look at you;" and hastily he left the room, unaware how he had unconsciously helped the plan of which Harry knew only a

small part. Presently Harry heard footsteps approaching the room, and the voice of the governor in earnest conversation. Then the door opened, and the strange figure once more stood before him. After frequent feeling of the pulse he recommended that the young man should be put to bed in a quiet room. "If possible," he said, "let it be on the basement, and if you have no objection, let me inspect the room."

The sound of the voice made Harry tremble; and the whole of that day, until he was removed in the evening to a cell at the bottom of the house, he puzzled his mind to recall where he had heard that voice before. But though the sound was perfectly familiar to him, he had no recollection of the face; and the agony of suspense as he construed and wondered over the English words and over the sound of the voice would almost have been sufficient to work him into a fever. Exhausted at last by anxious listening, for it had grown totally dark in his room, he fell into a troubled slumber.

He dreamt of Stralsund, of the happy days ere his great trouble came over him. He dreamt

that he stood once more on the rock on the little island, and was overlooking the Imperial camp, and that the gipsy stood by his side pointing out the various works, and that at last the gipsy said in a warning voice, "Haste thee and to work, for the time has come." He awoke, and curiously the voice still sounded in his ear. The room was lit by a lamp, and by the side of his bed stood the physician.

With a half-stifled cry Harry flew out of bed, and rushing to the mantled figure, almost embraced it, with the words, "Joe Marks! Joe Marks!"

"Hush!" whispered the gipsy, arresting the youth's impetuosity. "Do you want both of us to be killed? Say not another word, but listen. You have borne bravely hitherto."

Without utterance Harry seated himself on a chair, scarcely venturing to breathe. Then did the gipsy speak clear, concise, and hopeful words. The King of Sweden lay with a large army within three days' march of the castle. His own friend Baverley was on his way to attack it with a considerable force, hoping to surprise it.

"I greatly fear, however," he continued, "that the governor has been advised of it, and that when your friend arrives to-morrow he will find everything ready for his reception. We cannot therefore trust to this. Now listen to my plan; one life is worth another. In procuring this disguise I have already incurred very great risk. If you do not obey me implicitly, therefore, my danger will have been incurred in vain. Here is a rope, bind me; change your upper garments for mine, gag me, and disguised in my robe, leave this building. On the southernmost angle of the outer wall you will find a sentry, whom I have drugged; a rope ladder hangs down to the waterside, where a boat is in readiness. The night is dark; all depends upon your agility and silence. Now, quickly."

Feeling that this was no moment for indecision, Harry proceeded to bind the gipsy, who had already divested himself of his long robe and hood. For a moment he hesitated when leaving the room, doubting whether he was acting a noble part to leave his preserver in such a plight; but an impatient movement of the latter put an

end to his indecision, and closing the door softly, he wrapped the mantle around him and stole through the passages. Luckily no one within the house obstructed the supposed physician, and in a few moments Harry breathed the air outside. It was completely dark, but he knew his way perfectly. The wall was gained, the sentry lay in a state of helpless torpor. Arming himself with the soldier's pistols and sword, he felt for the ladder. It was there. He descended,—his foot was in the boat,—he was free.

But the time for action was not yet gone by. His flight might be discovered and a pursuit begun. He seized the oars with vigour, and each stroke separated him farther from the sombre mass that rose out of the water. Suddenly his boat came in violent contact with an object on the water, and he was thrown forward. Ere he could recover his position, he was seized, his mouth covered, and he himself dragged into another boat which was filled with men.

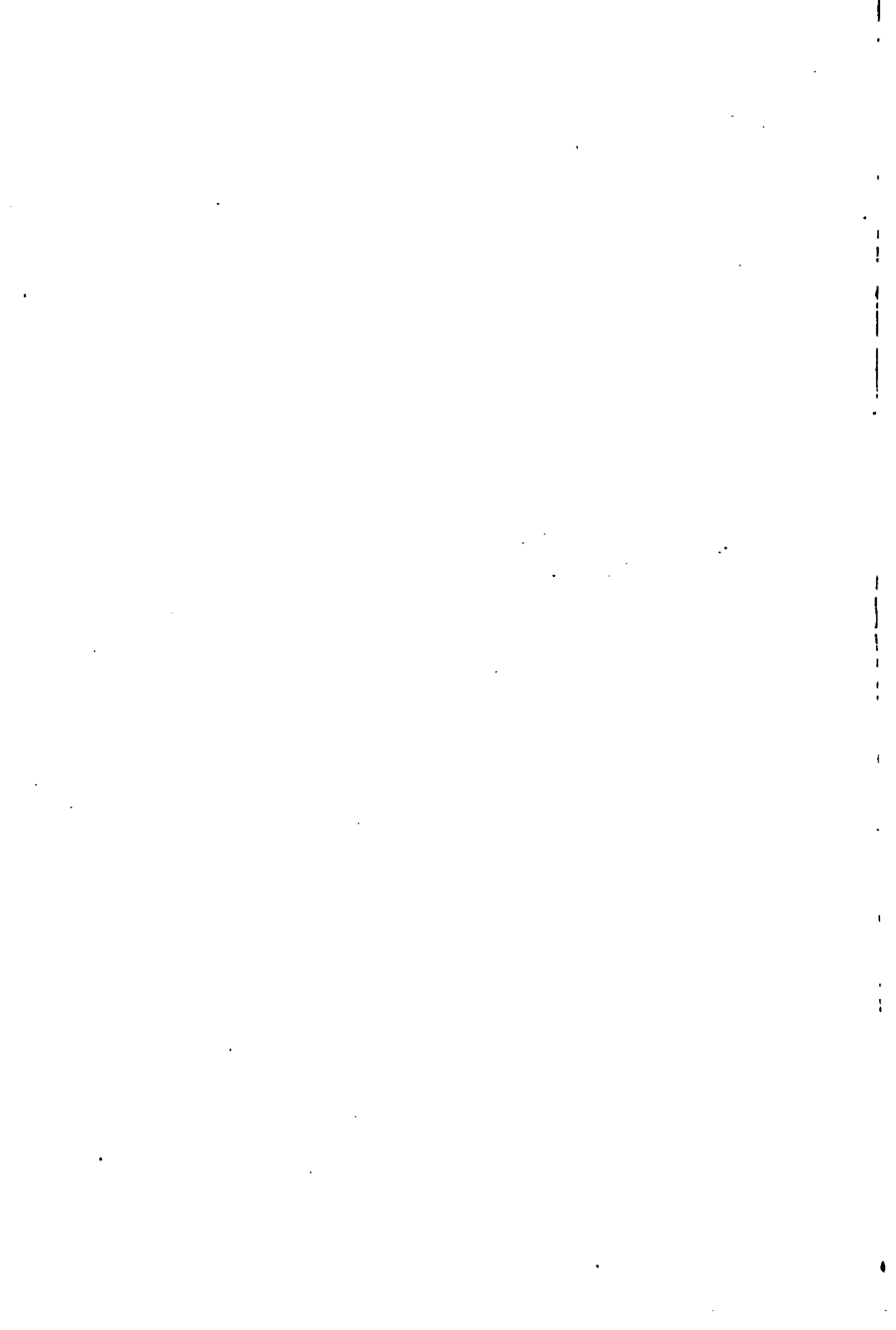
"Who art thou,—friend or foe?" asked a rough voice, in German.

"An escaped prisoner."



Escape from Templin.

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"Hallo! captain! this' comes handy," said another voice, in English. "What is thy name?"

It was William's voice,—William's honest, deep and clear voice, sending a thrill through his veins.

CHAPTER XX.

IN THE MEANTIME.

AS may be supposed, William's boat was not the only one on Lake Templin that night. Ere the two friends had disengaged themselves from each other's embrace, another boat, and another, came gliding up noiselessly, all filled with men armed to the teeth. No time was to be lost. With a sudden impulse Wyndham related in a few words how he had escaped, and how he found the sentry asleep. In a comparatively short time the wall was gained, and with a burning desire to set the other captives free, Wyndham led the way up the ladder, and found himself once more on the walls of the prison.

The rest is soon told. The garrison, not expecting this attack, was taken entirely by surprise. After a short but sharp fight it was disarmed and the castle gained. But as they knew that assistance must without fail arrive from the nearest military post within a few hours, the prisoners were hastily liberated and

armed, the garrison locked up in the cells, and the fortifications blown up. And when the sun rose the troop had again crossed the lake, and each horseman, with a liberated prisoner behind, was already on the road to the Swedish camp.

"And how have *you* fared all these years?" asked Harry, riding behind his friend.

"I have fared very well as regards the body," answered William, "a slight wound which I received in the taking of Stettin excepted. But I have been in the terrible anxiety over you," he said, looking fondly at Harry, "for I thought of nothing but your death, which I firmly expected to have taken place, having myself seen the cruelty of these mercenaries."

"It would have taken place, like enough," answered Harry, "but for some unaccountable kindness or leniency on the part of the governor, who insisted upon treating me more like a guest than like a prisoner." And he related to William what we know already. "But," he concluded, "how did you come to know that I was here? Is it true that the king has come over? I can hardly believe it; and yet of course it must be so."

"This would be the sixth time I have told you," said William, smiling; "but in order to satisfy your curiosity, I will tell you everything that has happened, as far as I was present or have been able to learn. Shortly after Wallenstein abandoned Stralsund, the King of Denmark, who was much afraid of having his territory taken away from him altogether, made peace with the emperor and withdrew within his country. This, you can fancy, made the Protestant Union weaker than ever. There were now two formidable Imperial armies in Germany; Mansfeldt had died, the Duke of Brunswick was nowhere to be found, the King of Denmark had made peace, and, in fact, the Union had not a man to oppose to Wallenstein and Tilly. This the Catholics soon saw, and they then forced the emperor to sign the Edict of Restitution, whereby the Protestants were grievously wronged and oppressed. The latter immediately resolved to turn to Gustavus and request him to come over and help them. Now you know that there was already some misunderstanding between the king and the emperor, for you recollect how the emperor sent troops

under Conti to help the Poles against Gustavus. So the king resolved to come over and assist the Protestants, and Sir Alexander Leslie received orders in April of this year to take possession of Rugen.

“The island of Rugen was captured in a few days, except one very strong fortress. The old fellow, however, commenced battering it from land and sea, when suddenly the garrison made a sally. Leslie perceived that the smoke of our guns entered the fort and prevented those inside from seeing us, and so he ordered me to take two companies and rush in. Favoured by the smoke, we got inside, and found hardly any one there. Then there was a tussle, I promise you, the garrison being hemmed in on both sides. But we soon made away with them, and I was placed inside the castle as custodian. In the end of June, one morning early, there lay the king’s fleet before us, and three boats were rowing ashore.* I knew the first figure that landed to be the king’s, even if I had not

* Hagenbach, in his lectures, maintains that Gustavus landed on Usedom, an island on the Pommersche-Hoff.

seen him do what he did. But when his suite, amongst whom I saw Lord Falkenberg, Count Thurn, Banner, Kniphausen, Sir John Hepburn, and others, had landed, the king uncovered, and kneeling down on the sand, offered up thanks to God. Immediately afterwards he seized a spade and fell to digging a trench, and got all those that were ashore to help him ; and being assisted each time by greater numbers of those who landed, a trench was soon thrown up and armed with cannon, so that in the evening the army was safely entrenched.

“I did not much like the idea of remaining in Rugen while the king was going to conquer Germany ; so I petitioned that I might exchange in Lord Reay’s regiment of horse, which request was granted. Some days afterwards the king landed all his forces on the island of Wollin, and having secured that and Usedom, he marched straight on to Stettin and encamped before the walls, from which a great number of spectators were looking down upon us, principally ladies. The king sent a messenger to the Duke of Pomerania, who was inside at that time, summon-

ing him to open the gates. The duke, who is an old man, came out in a carriage drawn by six magnificent horses, to request the king to allow the town to remain neutral; for you know he was afraid both of the king and of the emperor. 'No, no!' says the king, 'he who is not with us is against us; and you may be sure that we shall treat you better than Tilly or Pappenheim.' Well, the duke did not like it at first, and spoke of a large garrison, and being able to defend the city. 'Come, my lord duke,' said the king, 'as to your garrison, if that is it,' pointing to the ladies on the wall, 'we'll very soon make way with it.' At which the duke laughed, and begged to be allowed to return to the city and consult his council. 'Certainly,' says the king, 'allow me to give you an escort worthy of your station.' And as the coach returned, and the gates opened, he had three hundred soldiers marching in front of it, who quickly ran inside, mastered the gates and the garrison, and ere the duke knew it, the castle and the town were ours.

"Then the king divided his army into three

parts : one part marched into Mecklenburgh ; another, which he himself commanded, went to Stralsund, taking possession of all the towns on the way ; and we were sent into Pomerania, whence we returned just in time to witness a disgraceful piece of treachery. There was a certain Quint in the army, a colonel of horse, who for some reason or other having been sent on an expedition against the Imperial forces, went over to their side and allowed his men to be cut to pieces. This annoyed the king very much, and he declared that if ever he caught that Quint, or any of his friends or accomplices, they should be made an example of to the whole army. The king was now encamped near Greiffenhagen, having made himself master of the whole of Mecklenburgh and Pomerania in about two months. About seven weeks ago he resolved to attack Conti, who was encamped on the bank of the Oder, thus cutting off from Stettin all supply by that river. But when we came upon the camp of Torquati Conti, we found it so strong and well defended that the king dared not attempt a storm, but took up a position

not far from him. We could get all our provisions much more easily, of course, for the people here are so dead against the Imperialists that they murder them whenever they can. Besides, we pay ready money for all we get, and foraging parties are strictly prohibited.

“One day (a Wednesday evening) I was walking just outside the camp, all by myself in the dark, thinking about you, and hoping that some day you might be restored to us; when I became conscious that I was being followed by a black figure which I could only just distinguish against the lights of the camp. Wherever I went it was sure to follow me; and afraid lest, placing itself between me and the camp, it might prevent me from entering, I ran towards the camp as fast as I could; when, convinced that the mysterious figure was close upon me, I suddenly turned round, drew my sword, and nearly ran up against it. In some inexplicable way, however, I was knocked off my legs, and the mysterious individual, who proved to be a youth of perhaps twenty years, was at my throat, whispering in German, ‘Hold thy tongue; I’ll let thee go at once if

thou'lt answer me one question. Canst thou take a letter from me to Lieutenant Bayerley of the Scots Horse?'

"Much astonished, as you will readily believe, I told him that I was that person, which he would not at first believe, until, having asked me whether I had lost a friend, I told him your name and disappearance. That seemed to satisfy him, for leaving a slip of paper in my hand, he was away in a moment. Arrived in my tent, I looked at the paper. It ran as follows:—'Sir, one good turn deserves another. Have the kindness to keep an eye on Captain Johan Baptista, who is a traitor, and I may be able to tell you something about your friend Harry Wyndham. You may find me (if you come quite alone), Saturday night, ten of the clock, on the same spot.—AN IMPERIALIST FRIEND.'

"I did not put much faith in the communication, but still resolved to watch Baptista, whom I knew to have been a friend of Quint's. The next day nothing happened to awake my suspicion much, though I noticed that Baptista inquired particularly after the time at which worship was

to be held on the following day, the king having on that day (Friday) ordered a general fast and prayer. On Friday morning I pleaded a headache to excuse me from church; and I followed Baptista closely without being observed by him. I saw him put nails into the touch-holes of many of the guns, which I took good care to take out again with the point of my knife. At last, as he stood talking to a sentry and playing with his gun, he fired it under pretence of an accident. I knew very well that this was meant for a signal, so I ran up and ordered the sentry to beat the alarm. 'Do no such thing,' says Baptista. 'Yes, do,' said I, 'and run and tell the king there is treachery here;' and with that I had Baptista down and was on the top of him, with the point of my sword at his throat. The sentry hung the drum round his neck and beat the alarm while running to where the service was being conducted; and there was not much time to be lost either, for within half an hour we had 15,000 Imperialists down upon us. When the attack was beaten off, Baptista was summoned before a drumhead court-martial and

hanged in the sight of the whole army. The next evening I again met the boy, and he told me you were here, and that if I rowed to a little gate at the waterside and opened it with a petard, I should find but little resistance,—few knowing of the existence of this gate. I got permission to take three hundred horse with me and followed his advice. But whether we should have succeeded without your timely help is a matter of doubt, for we knew nothing of the inside of the prison ; and had we opened the gate with a petard we should not have been able to enter so quickly and silently as we did. But here we are in sight of the camp.”

And truly, riding to the top of a hill, they saw the Oder at their feet, and by the side of it the Swedish camp.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE KING.

IT was about noon when the troop arrived in the Swedish camp.

As soon as William had issued the necessary orders for the treatment of the liberated prisoners, he took Harry's arm, saying, "Come along. I must at once introduce you to my chief, Lord Falkenberg, who will be glad to see you. I dare say he will present you to the king."

Harry had no objection to this course, as he knew Lord Falkenberg from former days; and they were soon on their way to the village of Grimm, where the king and his staff had taken up their quarters. The marshal of the household was at that moment lodged in the second best house in the village,—the butcher's shop,—in the best room of which he had installed himself, to the immense pride of its owner. The two young men entered; the marshal was busily engaged with the papers with which his table was covered, for it was he who had been charged with the duty of providing

for the king's person and staff, and who was the confidant of the king's most secret plans. It was one of his characteristics that he never forgot any one who had once been brought into his master's presence. He remembered the young Scot instantly, and rose to welcome him with extended hand.

"Do you know," said he, "that the king hath inquired after you, and desires to see you?"

"Surely, it is too much honour," said Harry, "to be thus noticed by the greatest king in Europe. I should think that he must be busy with more important matters than the fate of poor captains."

"Ah," said Lord Falkenberg, smiling and shaking his head, "it is just in this I think his genius most chiefly appears. He thinks of everything and everybody; and I do believe he looks upon his soldiers as his children. Very often in Poland, when the weather was bad and trying, he sent for me in the night and inquired whether I had looked to the men, and whether they were sufficiently sheltered; though he often takes but indifferent lodgings himself, as you will see if you follow me."

As they issued into the street they found it full of soldiers, for the guard regiments had just returned from skirmishing practice. The men made way respectfully for the three officers, and looked with some curiosity at Wyndham whose history had somehow got known. The king was quartered in the chief place of the village, the council-house, inn, and seat of the magistrate, which dignitary was at the same time innkeeper. In a large but poorly furnished room, with a bright fire blazing in an immense chimney, a wooden floor covered with sand, and containing as articles of luxury a camp-chair and a writing-table near the fire, a man of middle stature was standing with his back to the door, in front of the fire. Harry's heart beat violently, for he knew that figure to be the king's, and many a time had he looked at it as it cheered the soldiers in the hottest of a fight. As the door closed, the noise attracted the king's attention, and he turned round sharply. He possessed undoubtedly a fine face ; his head was exceedingly well-shaped, and, if anything, small. An ample forehead, bright but kind eyes, and a firm deter-

mined mouth, the smile of which was all the more charming as it relieved a slight expression of severity which was apt to linger around it; such were the features of Gustavus Adolphus. He wore his brown hair short, and his beard pointed; a broad flat collar of white linen reached half way down his shoulders, and his doublet and hose were of plain dark silk. He had a paper in his hand in which he had been reading when he was interrupted by the entrance of Falkenberg and Harry. The marshal, when arrived in the middle of the room, presented Harry to his majesty, who vouchsafed him a kind nod.

"Why, sir captain! we thought you had taken service with the emperor," said he kindly.

"Not as long as this arm is able to lift a sword for your majesty," answered Harry.

"And how did you find the Imperial camp? Was there as much drunkenness as is reported?" asked the king.

Wyndham modestly described some of the scenes he had witnessed, and mentioned his interview with Wallenstein. The king grew curious, and sitting down in his chair, desired him to

describe Wallenstein fully ; which he did to the best of his memory, mentioning Wallenstein's question about the strength of the regiments.

"And did he ask nothing about me?" said the king.

"He asked whether I thought your majesty great in the field," said Wyndham.

"And what did you answer?"

"I answered that I thought your majesty to be great everywhere."

The king and Falkenberg both laughed, and seemed to enjoy the answer as a joke.

"I have just received a despatch from Brahé," said the king to Falkenberg, "and Leslie seems to think that some attack may be ventured upon Rostock, which is now the only town the Imperialists hold in Mecklenburg. What do you think?"

"I think it might be tried," said Falkenberg ; and added, musingly, "it would greatly please our friend Oxenstierna if he could once more enter the town where he studied a quarter of a century ago."

"Yes," said the king, "and we hope to get Jena and Wittenberg too." Then turning to

Harry, who had stepped back, he said silyly, "You have some friends in Stralsund, captain, have you not?"

Harry coloured, and muttered that he had.

"Would you like to take our despatch there?" he asked, laughing; and when he saw the response in Harry's beaming face, continued: "A captain without men is no captain. My lord, can you not give him a company of horse? Do; and let him be ready at five this evening to take my despatch to Stralsund. Till then, good-bye."

Harry sank upon one knee, overpowered by so much kindness, and reverently kissed the hand which the king held out to him. Punctually at the appointed hour he was again admitted into the king's presence, and received from his own hand the despatch to Leslie. He had in the meantime received the command of a troop of horse, though his request to have William with him could not at that moment be granted, as William was in immediate attendance upon Falkenberg. Full of spirits, therefore, Harry, at the head of his men, rode out of the camp in the direction of Stralsund.

Various thoughts occupied him as he went along. He had been saved from a great danger. He was going back to see those whom he loved, and he would do all in his power to indemnify them for the grief which he had caused them. And there was not a little bitterness mixed up with this feeling as he thought how he had been the cause of so much pain, and that, perhaps, he had done evil which could not be again made good. As he thought of this,—that possibly Helena had received an injury for life, or that the pastor had died in consequence of his daughter's grief, he trembled, and would have spurred his horse to fly all the way had not his troop detained him. He knew that Helena had been ill. Had she died? or was she, perhaps, married to some one else? They had written no letter, and held no communication with William since his departure. Surely, if some such catastrophe had not happened, they would have written once at least. Such and such-like were his thoughts: sometimes hope having the ascendancy, sometimes doubt, till a sudden event chased all these dreams out of his head.

They were going through a somewhat hilly and undulating country, and he had taken the precaution to send out an advanced guard, who reconnoitred the road. As they were entering a little forest leading up to a hill, these came riding back with the intelligence that a troop of Imperial horse, somewhat stronger than they, were approaching them. Harry immediately resolved upon a stratagem. He ranged his men on each side of the road in the forest so that they could not be seen, and ordered a dozen to turn tail and travel down the hill, as if flying away from the enemy. The result proved that he was quite right in his surmise. In a little time the Imperialist troop reached the top of the hill, and observing the dozen flying from them, the commanding officer ordered half of his men to pursue them, who presently came galloping past Harry and his troop in full pursuit. Not long afterwards the other half appeared in a gentle trot, and was in a trice surrounded.

A sharp combat then began. The Swedish cavalry with their heavy horses were more than a match for the Croats, whose small animals and

light armament were more suited to a running encounter. Still they fought with the courage of despair, and broke the line around them in several places. At one spot, however, the fight raged hotly. The officer in charge having assembled the bravest around him, with a stern determination to fight against any odds, held out against the ever-increasing number of his opponents; the men about him were giving way, unable to resist the fury of the Swedes; and one giant was already lifting up his sword to deal the officer a death-blow, when Harry spurred his horse, and beating the sword aside, cried in a voice of thunder, "Hold! no murder!" Then, turning to the officer, he said, "You are my prisoner."

The officer, who had expected the blow without flinching, cast a look of gratitude at the speaker, and handed over his sword. But when he saw Harry's face, he turned deadly pale, started in his saddle, and brought his hands to his eyes. At this moment Harry noticed a commotion amongst his men, and looking round, saw the other half of the Croats and those who had escaped galloping to the rescue, with their lances pointed at the Swedes.

Before he had time to rally his men, the Croats were down amongst them with that swiftness and fury which render their charge one of the most irresistible in the world: Ere they had been fighting many minutes, they had rescued all their comrades, except those whose wounds prevented them from remaining in the saddle, and were flying in all directions pursued by the Swedes.

As Harry that evening went to rest in the village where he had taken up his quarters, he said to himself, "Where have I seen the face of that officer before? I know it well; but whose is it?"

CHAPTER XXII.

BACK IN STRALSUND.

IT was with a beating heart that Wyndham rode through the well-known Franken Gate on to the quay of Stralsund. Two years and a half had well-nigh elapsed since he left it. Many things had happened since then which had exercised a great influence upon his life. The appearance of the city was totally different from that of former days. It was then bright summer weather, and the sunbeams played upon the waves of the sea; the birds sang in the trees, and though their song was often interrupted by the report of the firearms, nature around was green and lovely. Now, a cold blast of north wind chilled him to the very bone,—everything he passed, as if prophetic of his reception, looked cold, dead, uninviting. The birds had long flown to a warmer climate, the sun was hid behind black clouds, and the sea, like a mass of lead, looked so gloomy, that he involuntarily felt as if his visit to the town would bring him but little good. When arrived at the Town-hall, he

heard to his disappointment that the governor was not at that moment in town, as he had gone over to the island of Rugen, but would shortly return. Hardly allowing himself time to see to the quartering of his men, and to respond to the hearty congratulations of some of his old comrades, he hurried away to the Franken-Strasse, and eagerly approached the house where he had spent the happiest moments of his life.

How well did he remember the shop at the corner of the street, and the houses of the neighbours ; the very stones seemed known to him. The knock which he gave sounded at once familiar and melancholy ; there was no response, the noise echoed loudly and mournfully through the house.

"Come," thought he, "I must not begin to think the worst at once. That old servant was always slow in opening the door. I shall knock again, and if they do not open, I know a way to get into the garden."

Accordingly, he knocked again, and heard steps coming to the door. Certainly they were not the steps of the old servant, nor those of any of the family ; but they might have taken a new

servant. The middle-aged woman who appeared in answer to his summons, attired in somewhat showy but slovenly dress, certainly was a total stranger; and Harry's heart sank within him, for he knew that Helena would never have allowed any one in her house to be so untidy.

"Is Pastor Hermann at home?" he asked in a faltering voice.

"Pastor—who?"

"Pastor Hermann," repeated Harry.

"I know not Pastor Hermann," said the woman; "who is he?"

"He lived here at one time,—some two years since," said Harry, almost choking.

"Oh, ay, yes; I remember now. That was the Calvinist who had to go away; and a good job too. I know naught about him."

"But stay, my good woman," said Harry, gently preventing her from closing the door, "I am greatly interested in his whereabouts. If you could help me——"

"I tell you again that I know nothing, and I will know nothing, of that Calvinist, that heretic, that wicked man,"

Harry heard no more. He went out into the street, scarcely knowing whither to turn. He walked slowly away, along the road which he had so often walked by *her* side, but scarcely noticed it, for his mind was overwhelmed with sadness, and there was no one to console him.

Sir Alexander Leslie had returned from Rugen, whither he had gone to inspect the garrison, and was awaiting the king's messenger in his room. He was seated in his official chair, before a table covered with papers and maps, and by his side sat an adjutant. When Harry entered, his face wore a grave and dignified expression befitting his high station; but when he saw Wyndham, a broad smile lit up his features, and relinquishing all his official dignity, he started from his chair to meet the youth, and grasping his hand warmly, clapped him on the back several times in his rough, homely old way, and went so remarkably near to a hug that the adjutant thought he had better look the other way. Harry was quite moved by the general's cordiality, and told his story as shortly as possible, for he longed to ask another question which was burning on his lips.

"Oh," said Leslie, who had returned to his seat, and had listened attentively, "you may be very thankful, Wyndham. I am surprised that they have dealt with you so very leniently. Are you sure they did not skin you?"

"They must have done it very quietly," said Harry with a smile, "for I am not aware of it."

"Mercy on us," said the general musingly, and passing his hand gently over Wyndham's back; "I thocht Wallenstein skinned all his prisoners. Are you sure not? Mercy on us,—ye ought to be thankful!"

"I *am* thankful, general," said Harry. "But here is the despatch of his majesty the king. Will you be pleased to read it?"

The general, who had risen from the ranks and could not read, took the despatch upside down, and looking at it unconcernedly, said to Harry, "You will find a good many things in this city altered since you left."

"It is just what I would ask you," said Harry. "To my great sorrow, I find that Pastor Hermann has left his old house and, I fear, the city. But

can you tell me what has become of him, as I am deeply interested in his lot?"

"Oh! the Calvinistic minister that was here! Ay, I remember him very well. Right good sermons he used to give us; and I used to love a talk with the old man. But somehow his congregation fell off. Probably because this is not a very favourable town for his creed. The people gradually dropped off; and when first your friend William Baverley had to go, and then Wechter,—who, by the bye, is as wise and thoughtful an old soldier as I have had the pleasure to meet,—and there was hardly any one left, the pastor went too."

Harry sighed, and was silent for some moments. At last he said: "Herr Wechter gone too! How was it that he went? And do you know whither the pastor has gone?"

"No, not I. The fact is, he was advised to go somewhere by Wechter before he left the town. They spoke of Halberstadt, and even of Switzerland, but where he has really gone I cannot say. Probably Wechter could, but even he is not here now."

"But at least you can tell me where *he* is?" asked Harry eagerly.

Leslie shook his head. "He must be either in Sweden, in Poland, or somewhere hereabouts. He was so saddened by the death of his wife, that he resolved to accept the invitation of his old friend Oxenstierna, and sailed for Sweden nearly six months ago."

"The death of his wife," repeated Harry, "and the loss of his son!" The tone in which he said these last words was so deeply mournful that the general looked at him with pity.

Full of sorrow, Harry left the city the next day, after having convinced himself that no trace of the Hermann family could be discovered. The only man who would be able to tell him whether Helena was yet in the land of the living was Herr Wechter; and to search for him was a tedious and difficult undertaking, of which the result was at best but dubious.

Having received a warning from the late skirmish, Harry proceeded on his way back but slowly. When he arrived at the camp, after

having delivered Leslie's despatch to Lord Falkenberg, he went to seek his friend Baverley, and found him inside his tent.

"Good news!" he said joyfully, as Harry entered; "now I hope that we shall at last get somebody to cope with."

"What good news is that?" asked Harry, quietly seating himself.

"Why, Torquato Conti has resigned the command, and Tilly is again appointed generalissimo. He has already assembled an army, and is marching hither as fast as he can; so we shall have plenty of work anon. But how are you so silent? Is anything amiss with Helena?"

Harry told his story in a few words. Both friends were silent for some moments.

"The only thing we can do is to wait. I am certain Herr Wechter is not in the army yet, for then I must have heard from him. Methinks he is in Sweden, assisting the chancellor, with whom he studied at Rostock, and under whom he afterwards served both as soldier and as counsellor. We have frequently spoken of him, and he has as warm an admiration for Oxenstierna as we have."

"And to write to him, I suppose, would be of little use?" said Harry.

"We may try," answered William; "he is very kind-hearted, and will do all he can to help you. If *he* knows where they are, depend upon it *you* will know too. But what is this the soldiers are cheering at so? It is not the king, surely?"

Both lifted up the curtain of their tent, which they had dropped for the sake of privacy, and saw three officers, apparently of high rank, riding at walking pace through the camp and past the various groups of soldiers towards the king's tent.

"I know the one on the right hand and the one on the left," said William; "but I never saw the middle one before. What a fine-looking soldier he is, to be sure! How well he sits on his beautiful horse! I fancy he must be a great man."

"Who is the right-hand one?" asked Harry; "I know the other is Gustavus Horn, our old commander in Poland. But the other,—What? No! it can't be! And yet——"

"Yes, Harry," said William, laughing, and happy that his thought had been turned into a

different direction, "it's Banner with a beard. I did not recognise him at first; but when you come a little closer and watch his eyes,—and especially when you hear his voice,—you see at once that it is the brave old boy. You know, one day, when storming a battery at the head of his men, he mounted it first and waved his men to come on, which they did but slowly. They said they had no idea 'Father Banner' was there, for as all his men wore short peaked beards, they were so much alike you could hardly tell them from each other. Well, from that moment, no longer to confuse his children, he has let his beard grow freely, though he does not allow any one else to do it. See how popular he is!"

"Yes," said a veteran who stood close by them; "but it's the middle one that the real cheering is for. He's the man that is, or ought to be, most popular."

"Who is it?" asked Harry and William, in one breath.

"Count Matthias von Thurn," said the veteran with dignity, as if the honour which that name had won during the long years in which it had

been on men's lips were part and parcel of himself.

"Oh!" said Harry eagerly; "is this Count Thurn? I am so glad to see him at last. Do you know him?"

"Know him!" said the veteran, looking contemptuously at Harry; "know him, indeed! I have served under that man the greatest part of my life, ever since I was a little boy, in his household at Prague, more than thirty years ago now. Know him, indeed! I should hope so."

"I have heard," said William, "that his life has been exceedingly eventful."

"Eventful!" repeated the officer, with another look of contempt; "eventful is not the word. It's marvellous! My father, I am proud to own, was one of his dependants, and the count resolved to take me into his household as page. I first went with him to the war with the Turks, and against Bethlem Gabor, in Hungary. That was the beginning of my adventures with him, and I have known him do many wonderful things since. I must go now to pay him my respects. Good evening."

When the old soldier had gone, William said, musingly,—“Yes, that man has undoubtedly done great things; and yet he has met with very little success in all his undertakings!”

“It does seem strange,” said Harry; “a general of the empire; the man who saved Vienna from the Turks, the greatest noble in Bohemia, the leader of a successful insurrection, who marched his insurgents to the walls of the capital; and has yet achieved nothing, and is trusted by no one, He is, I should think, incapable of living and fighting for a great idea, and is only useful under a leader like the king.”

CHAPTER XXIII

BAD NEWS.

THE winter had now set in with great severity, and but for the king's excellent arrangements would have been very trying for his army, especially for that part of it which was not so accustomed to the hard winters of Sweden as the inhabitants of that country themselves. He had provided every one of his soldiers with a sheepskin, which, together with the warm tents and good food with which he took care to supply them, greatly softened the hardships of the climate. The Imperialist soldiers, who were neither so hardy nor so well provided for, suffered dreadfully; the more because they had to get all their provisions by main force, and often found the resistance of the exasperated burghers or labourers more fatal than a mere squabble. Moreover, the latter were everywhere helped and encouraged in their resistance by the king, who paid for every pennyworth he consumed. The former's request for a cessation of hostilities as

long as the winter lasted, was answered by Gustavus with the words, "My soldiers have been taught to fight whenever there is an enemy,—in winter as well as in summer." And fight they did. Daily skirmishes and surprises, in which the Imperialists were invariably worsted, kept the soldiers of the king's army in high spirits, and made them long for the summer in which they could meet their enemy more openly.

One day in the end of February, 1631, Harry was walking alone through the streets of the little town of Schwedt, where the king had pitched his camp at that time. He was in a melancholy mood, and his thoughts returned with increased force to her whom he had lost. William, who had been ordered to superintend a convoy of cattle from the neighbouring town of Colberg, had been away for some days, and finding himself quite alone, the sorrow, which the busy life of the army had hitherto somewhat kept down, mastered him altogether. With his head bent he walked slowly along, heeding nothing around him.

Suddenly the sound of trumpets and the trampling of horses fell upon his ear. He

looked up, and saw advancing upon him a body of cavalry headed by two trumpeters. Thinking that this was only one of the usual troops coming to relieve guard, he stepped aside to let them pass; but what was his astonishment when, five or six ranks having passed him, one solitary horseman followed, dressed in a costume denoting both civil and military rank, and giving him as much the appearance of a clergyman as of a soldier. He wore a breastplate, there were pistols in his saddle, and a sword by his side; but his armour was covered with a mantle of black cloth, and his head with a cap of the same material. Harry required no second glance at the pensive and somewhat stern features to recognise the great Swedish chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, and the salute which he made called forth a very agreeable smile upon the statesman's open and noble face. While still gazing, he started, and was scarcely able to return the nod of cordial welcome which he received from an elderly man whose face and grey locks had often been before him as he thought of his past life. It was Herr Wechter.

Scarcely knowing what he did, Harry slowly followed the troop as it wound through the narrow and crooked street and halted on the square where the king resided in the town-house. When he arrived, the chancellor and his suite had already dismounted and entered. Judging that they would remain inside some time, he turned back, disappointed at not having been able at once to speak to Herr Wechter, ere another day, another hour, might perhaps once more separate them, and possibly for ever. His thoughts were disturbed by a dragoon who came riding after him, and who informed him that he was wanted. He turned round, and there, walking towards him with a face full of cordial welcome, was the man whom he most desired to see.

"We thought that Captain Wyndham was no longer amongst the living," said old Wechter, pressing his hand tenderly. "We had abandoned all hopes of seeing thy face again. What strange circumstance brings thee hither, my friend?"

Wyndham told the story of his delivery, and the strange manner in which he had been treated

at the castle. Most of the prisoners whom they had liberated had either returned home or entered the king's army; but there were not a few whom the many years of suffering and hard labour had reduced to such a state of incompetency that they were lost to this world and its duties. And then he told the old man of his visit to Stralsund, the bitter disappointment that awaited him there, and the sorrow that oppressed him now each day as to the whereabouts of Helena, whom he could not but consider in danger as long as he was not near her.

"I know you are the only man able to relieve my anguish. Know you anything of them, and how they are?"

"Yes," answered Herr Wechter, somewhat sadly. "After it had pleased God to take away my dear wife, and leave me alone in the world, I thought it wiser to accept the invitations of an old friend of mine in Stockholm, who assured me that my services would be very acceptable to the Swedish court. At the same time Pastor Hermann acquainted me with his intention to leave the town for a more southern one. He feared

that the climate would prove too severe for his child, who, moreover, would be benefited by a change of scene which would turn her thoughts into another direction, and efface the sad recollections which preyed upon her. At first I endeavoured to procure him a place in Switzerland, where both the climate and the scenery would exactly meet his wishes. But this was not to be. After some trouble I found out that a large Calvinistic congregation was in want of a pastor in the town of Magdeburg, and——”

“Magdeburg?” repeated Harry, with some terror in his voice; “Magdeburg?”

“Yes,” answered Herr Wechter, astonished at his vehemence; “the climate certainly is not so severe there as in Stralsund; and moreover——”

“But do you know,” gasped Harry, “that the town is threatened with a siege by Tilly, and that a messenger arrived here two days ago, praying the king for assistance?”

“Tilly!” said Wechter, “I thought he lay in Frankfort. Besides, Magdeburg is a bishopric, and has nothing to fear from the Imperialists.”

“Ah! but Christian William, the administra-

tor, has taken the thing into his own hands," answered Harry. "He has got a vote of confidence from the town, collected troops, and begun a warfare on his own account. He has driven the Imperial garrison out of several places in the neighbourhood ; and now that Tilly, who has left Frankfort and has sent Pappenheim already before him, is approaching, the administrator withdraws his troops again into the town, and finding himself too weak to sustain a siege, he has sent a messenger here praying for help. Are you sure they are there ? Oh ! say, 'No.'"

This, however, Herr Wechter could not do. He was but too sure that they were in the town, as he had not long since received a letter from them. The only thing he could do, therefore, was to endeavour to put Harry's fears at rest ; but the latter knew too well how great the danger was, if the city were threatened with all the cruelties of the Imperial army. For, not long since, a detachment of Swedes having been sent to a certain post, it was attacked by a much larger number of Imperialists. They made a valiant resistance ; but at last, overcome by sheer numbers, they were

killed in cold blood, only one unhappy fugitive, who died soon after, having escaped to tell the mournful tale.

"Thank you, Herr Wechter," said Harry, pressing his hand, with a faint smile. "I dare say it is foolish of me to fear much for Helena; but you know I have seen quite enough of Imperial honour to make me tremble. I shall go to Lord Falkenberg and ask him what I can do."

Not long after, he was admitted into the presence of Falkenberg, who was pacing up and down the room with a grave face. He scarcely returned Harry's salute, and remained some moments in deep thought. At last he looked up, as if to ask Harry what he desired.

"My lord," said Harry respectfully, "I wish to ask but one question. Is Magdeburg in danger?"

"In *great* danger," answered the marshal. "Why do you ask?"

"Because," said Harry, boldly, "if it is, I must go and help in its defence."

"Your help would be of little use," said the general somewhat coldly.

"Ah! my lord," said Harry, speaking rapidly, "if you had dear intimate friends there, the very thought of whose danger would make you tremble, would you not fly to their defence and prefer dying by their side and for them, to living and mourning their loss? I shall go to the king; I know he will not refuse me permission."

"Stay!" said Falkenberg, stretching out his hand and smiling slightly at the young man's impetuosity; "you need not go to the king. Would you have any objection to take me with you to Magdeburg?"

Harry looked at him in astonishment, and could not understand his question.

"This morning," continued Falkenberg, "I received orders from the king to take one regiment of foot and hasten to the defence of Magdeburg. I have just arranged my earthly matters, for it is possible that I may never return. I have asked pardon of all whom I have offended, and pardoned all who have offended me; and I recommend you to do the same,—at least, if you desire to stand well with God and your fellow-men. Is it your earnest desire to go to Magdeburg?"

"It is," answered Harry. The solemn and pious tone of Falkenberg had moved him.

"Then be ready to-night; we start at dusk. To-morrow the king breaks up his camp here and marches to Königsberg and to Frankfort. So farewell for the present."

That evening Harry was on his way to Magdeburg with the troops over which Falkenberg had the command.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE COUNCIL OF WAR.

THE city of Magdeburg, situated on the left bank of the Elbe, is still considered one of the wealthiest and most flourishing towns in Germany. In the year 1631 its prosperity was comparatively greater. It had no great competitors; the industry and influence which now it shares with a dozen other towns since sprung up, were then its solitary and undisputed possession. It was the capital of a bishopric. Its citizens enjoyed a greater amount of freedom than those of almost any other town in Germany, and its favourable position on the Elbe made its commerce eminent indeed. It is one of the most ancient towns of the empire, and at the time of our story it was but too apparent, by the irregularity of the architecture, that its growth had been the work of ages. It consisted of two parts, the old city and the new. Both had the form of an irregular

square, while the old city was connected with the opposite bank of the Elbe by a ship-bridge, supported in the middle of the river by a small island. The town was strongly fortified, and surrounded by ditches; and so well had its defences been planned, that it was, and indeed is now, reckoned to be all but impregnable.

Such, at least, did General Tilly find it. In the latter part of February of the year 1631, he had surrounded the city on the land side, erected batteries on the other side of the water, and had so effectually cut off all communication, that not a person could approach the city even by the river without imminent risk of life. But though he had inclosed the town, though after the first fortnight all the outworks had been carried and destroyed, and although his guns were now playing upon the walls, the siege had lasted nearly three months, and he saw himself no nearer a surrender than before. A general assault he dared not venture upon, for the walls were high, and not a single breach had yet been made. Moreover, the report ran that Gustavus Adolphus was marching to the rescue, and to starve the city

into surrender before that time he knew was impossible. He had already stopped his fire, and withdrawn part of his troops, when, on the evening of the 9th of May, he called a council of war of the principal officers of his army, as he was unwilling to trust his own judgment in so difficult a matter. Let us enter the house where the officers are assembled.

It was an old-fashioned country seat, on the other side of the Elbe, long since abandoned by its owners. In a large room, or hall, lighted by two large windows looking north and south, a long table, covered with a dark green cloth, was set in the middle of the marble floor, and around it were grouped the officers of the Imperial army, and of that of the Roman Catholic League. Apparently, the president or principal had not yet arrived, for the officers were standing or sitting in various groups, and chatting and laughing without restraint. Suddenly there was a general silence. The officers took their seats at the table, and all eyes were turned to a door at the farther end of the hall, which was being opened by a musketeer. Two men made their appearance, and a greater

contrast than they offer it would be difficult to find.

The one was of small stature, somewhat stooping, with hard, austere features, thin, hollow cheeks, a long nose, and a broad, wrinkled forehead ; while there was an expression of gloom—of dark brooding, upon his face and in his eyes, which made it a relief to turn to the figure which followed him. It was that of a cavalry officer, fully equipped, and as tall and well made as any private cuirassier. Under the shining helmet and waving plume, which he carried loosely on his head, there was a face at once open and intelligent, but impetuous and haughty. The manner in which he glanced over the assembled officers, and frowned as he saw several chairs empty, showed that there was no sullen silent anger with him, since he displayed every mood without attempt at concealment. The one who preceded him had as little of the soldier in his dress as the other had of the civilian. The former wore a silk doublet and hose of a dark colour, a Spanish mantle, and a high-peaked hat ; the latter shining armour, his sword was suspended from a silk scarf, and his hands were covered with

stout leather gloves. The one was Jahn Tserclaes, Count von Tilly, late general of the Bavarian army, and now generalissimo of the Imperial army ; the other, Count Pappenheim, the great cavalry general, and the most ardent and enthusiastic supporter of the house of Austria.

Amidst a general silence the two generals took their seat at the table : the generalissimo at the head, and Pappenheim on his right hand. After a moment, Tilly rose, and with a sombre but clear and distinct voice, proceeded to unfold their position before Magdeburg. He had been informed that the town possessed enough provision to carry it through another two months of siege ; there was an imminent danger of the Swedish invader falling suddenly upon them, in which case they would find themselves between two fires, for the spirited sallies of the garrison had shown that they were not to be overlooked. On the other hand, the town of Magdeburg was so important a place that its falling into Swedish hands would prove a serious calamity to the Imperial arms, as its strength and situation made it excellently suited as a store-house and arsenal for their enemies. Tilly

finished by calling upon the generals and officers to give him the benefit of their experience, and sat down with a gloomier look than before.

The first who rose was Altringer, Tilly's companion in arms. In a fervent and eloquent speech he pointed out that it would be the height of folly to await the arrival of the Swedish king in a camp and situation so untenable as theirs. "The Swedish army," he said, "is no longer what we have held it to be. It is well trained, well equipped, and well commanded; this is the only army which at this moment can be opposed to that force; prudence, therefore, must command our actions more than love of conquest and thirst for glory. Our defeat would expose all Germany to the victor; our cautious retreat will thwart his measures."

As he spoke, Pappenheim, who sat opposite to him, frowned, and a curious change came over his face. He had put his helmet aside, and upon his forehead could now be seen a slight mark, as of two daggers or swords crossing each other. As he heard Altringer's recommendations to prudence, his eyes sparkled, his cheeks flushed, and the two

marks upon his forehead swelled, became blood-red, and stood out prominently.

Even before Altringer had finished his oration, he jumped up passionately, and exclaimed in angry tones that rang through the room,—

“Since when, indeed, has the brave Altringer found it necessary to fly before an enemy whom he has never met, and of whose numbers and strength he has apparently not the faintest conception? Shall we relinquish our prey when it is almost within our teeth, because we fancy we hear the footsteps of an approaching foe? I am for a general assault on all sides. If that Swedish madman should dare to come upon us, are we not commanded by the most experienced and far-famed general of our age?”

There was a silence when Pappenheim sat down. After some moments a veteran general rose, and in a hesitating voice, with many apologies, proceeded to narrate how he had been present at the siege of Maestricht, when only a stripling, under the command of the Duke of Parma; how then, also, Count Hohenlo was marching to the relief of the city, and how the duke resolved to take

the town ere it could be prevented. How, after having stormed it nine times on one day, he made a feint as if withdrawing from the siege, by which the citizens became less careful in their vigilance. Suddenly, he proceeded to say, the next morning at daybreak the town was stormed on eight sides simultaneously, and the city taken. He ended by drawing a parallel between the two cases and recommending the adoption of the plan in this instance. Several officers of high rank and great experience also rose and corroborated this statement or cited other examples.

At last, after Pappenheim had spoken again, and incited the minds of the assembly with the prospects of revenge,—for a great many soldiers had fallen before the city already,—and of rich spoil, Count Tilly rose. During the whole debate he had been silent. A gloomy expression had reigned upon his face, and one might have fancied that he took no part whatever in the proceedings, had not his eyes wandered restlessly from speaker to speaker, from face to face, from one extremity of the table to the other, as if he were carefully weighing and examining the different elements

which composed this singular body. When he rose his opinion had been formed. The city was to be assaulted early in the morning of the next day. Pappenheim was to scale the walls of the new town, Altringer the spot where the walls of the old and new town met, and Tilly's troops would mount the bastion at the west corner of the quadrangle. Three shots from a mortar were to be the sign. And as the officers parted from each other, full of hopes and in the prospect of a glorious victory, they said to each other, "To-morrow, about this time, we shall feast in Magdeburg."

CHAPTER XXV

MAGDEBURG'S DOOM.

WE shall now visit the city of Magdeburg itself. In one of the streets in the neighbourhood of the magnificent cathedral and of the Convent of the Barefoot Friars, stood a little house, neat and comfortable in appearance. From the window the face of Helena was anxiously peering down the street, evidently expecting some one. The sorrows which she had borne had ripened her beauty; and though always lovely, she now possessed a calmness and dignity which added to her sweet grace. As she looked through the window a bright smile came over her face, and she rushed to the door. A moment afterwards she returned to the room on the arm of Harry Wyndham. There was an expression of deep and tender affection in his face as he looked down at her, and yet there was a dissatisfaction—a something of restlessness or pain in it, which did not escape her watchful eye.

"What ails you, Harry?" she said. "I expected to see your face radiant with happiness because the Imperialists have withdrawn. Surely," she added, archly, "you do not want more fighting?"

"No, indeed, I do not," he answered earnestly; "and yet something warns me that this is but a false silence, and that the real storm will break above our heads with terrible fury. The prince should not interfere in these matters, for he has no experience whatever." These last words he said more to himself.

"What has he done?" asked Helena; "cannot you tell me? I am so anxious to know."

"It is very simple," answered her lover. "You know the fire of the enemy suddenly stopped this morning, and, as far as we could discern, they manifested the intention to withdraw. The prince, Christian William, immediately insists upon diminishing the watches and the number of rounds, for he says the burghers have been troubled enough already. Of course, Lord Falkenberg would not consent to any such thing, and he is quite right; for in such cases double

vigilance and watchfulness are necessary. These Imperialists are not to be trusted farther than they can be seen ; and I am almost certain that they are meditating some dastardly trick."

"We are in God's hand, Harry," said Helena ; "and I believe that whatever the prince administrator does, he does it with the intention of benefiting both our cause and the city."

"No doubt," said Harry, somewhat bitterly ; "but it is just there his fault lies. He is too wise in his own conceit." He paused, and added in a lower voice, as if reviewing while he spoke the position of affairs, "But why does he not listen to wiser and older men ? His whole measure of arming the citizens has been a failure. The poor complain that *they* have too much to bear, and the rich that *they* have ; they quarrel amongst themselves, and not a day passes but we have trouble with them. What was expedient in Stralsund is useless and worse here, and the administrator ought to see it. I must go again to the Town-hall, and support Falkenberg. It is our duty, and he must not be left to do it all by himself."

With many entreaties, however, Helena prevailed upon him to sit down and take some food. As he had not tasted any for some hours, it was very welcome, though he would probably have forgotten it in his excitement and dissatisfaction. It was late ere he came home again, weary and tired, and still more dissatisfied than before. He found the pastor and his daughter waiting for him, to hear the result of the deliberations at the Town-hall; and it was not to be wondered at, with their little experience in military matters, that the cessation of the Imperial fire made a greater impression upon them than the fact that caution now became much more necessary than ever. They repaired to rest, and were soon in a calm slumber, entirely ignorant of the fearful doom which had at that time already been pronounced over the unhappy city. Before morning their rest was roughly broken,—

“Harry! Harry! I hear the alarm-bells ringing, and I fancy they are shooting in the city.”

Such were the old pastor's words as he stood in the early day, trembling and half-dressed, before Harry's door. After having knocked re-

peatedly, and heard no answer, he opened the door and found the room empty, and the bed so little disturbed that the occupant could scarcely have used it. At the same time the noise grew nearer and nearer, and the report of firearms fell more quickly upon his ear.

"Father, father!" Helena cried in a frightened voice; "what is this noise? Is the city being taken?"

She stood in the door of the room, with her hands clasped and her pale face looking anxiously into that of her father. "Is there not danger?" she continued; "I have never heard the noise so near us before."

"We are in the hand of God, my child, and He will guard us from danger," said the old man, devoutly; "but I almost fear that the worst has come. Let us dress and go down stairs, where we can pass the time in prayer, till we know something more certain."

The confused shout of soldiers, the clash of swords, and the ring of firearms became louder than ever; and it was with trembling hands that the pastor dressed himself and hurried to join

Helena and the old servant in the lower room. Here, amidst the noise which increased every moment, they knelt down, having made fast the door, and the pastor breathed a short and earnest prayer to God that He might help and protect them. Nearer and nearer came the tumult, more fierce were the cries, more piercing the shrieks of the women and children. It was an awful moment, full of the direst suspense. Soon the little street below resounded with men's voices. Then they all sprang back, for a shot from a pistol had smashed the lock of the door. The soldiers pressed in upon them, and there seemed no possibility of resisting their brute anger. But at this crisis of their fate Harry's voice was heard. Sharper rang the clash of swords, and in another minute he was seen forcing his way into the room, wearing, to their astonishment, the guise of an Imperial trooper. We draw a veil over the scene that followed, and the murderous strife that filled the city.

An hour later, and Harry might be seen carrying Helena in his arms, and hastening to the cathedral, followed by the pastor and his servant. They

opened the back door, when a horrible spectacle presented itself to them—the church was filled with the lifeless bodies of women and children. They turned back, but the buildings behind them were in flames. The air was filled with screams.

“Then to our own church,” cried Harry, flying past the side of the cathedral into Broad Street, the principal street of the town. The spectacle increased in horror. Women, little children, old men rushed about frantically; heaps of corpses covered the street, the stones were slippery with blood. Still they fled on, hoping to reach their own little church in safety, when, turning into a little square, they met a mounted officer of the League.

He pulled up when he saw them; he jumped from his horse; he was by their side: “Pastor Hermann, Helena, how is this? Follow me; hold my stirrup on each side.”

Instinctively the trembling fugitives clung to him.

“And you, sir, leave us!” said the officer, sternly, pointing with his sword in a different direction, imagining that he spoke to one of the soldiers of the League.

At that moment, however, it flashed across Harry's brain that he had seen the Croat officer before. Yes ; he was sure of it now. It was the same one whose life he had saved in the skirmish on the way to Stralsund. And thus, while still supporting Helena, he said, lifting up his face to the officer, "Do you not remember meeting me on the Demmin Heath, Herr Captain, six months ago, with your Croats ?"

"What !" cried the officer, astonished ; "can this be true ? I owe you a great debt, sir. It is good that you are thus disguised, for the troops are taking fearful revenge, and have sworn to kill every man in the town,—and every woman too," he added, with a faint and painful smile, "to judge by what I have already seen. But no more words, for time is precious, and we are running great danger, Pastor," he said to the astonished old man, who could hardly believe his eyes and ears, "grasp my stirrup ; and you"—he turned to the servant—"grasp the other." Then, addressing himself to Harry, he said, throwing him his own cloak, "Throw this hussar mantle over you, and carry Helena behind my horse."

Once more they found themselves in Broad Street, which became every moment more crowded, more bloody, and more horrible. Helena shuddered, and her head fell on Harry's shoulder. He clasped her more firmly and whispered, "Hold yourself perfectly motionless and shut your eyes, then you will attract less attention."

They moved on as best they could between drunken soldiers laden with booty and stained with blood, desperate citizens and flying women till they came to the bank of the Elbe, and there, indeed, the scene surpassed all description. The bank was crowded ; women, children, men, of all ages, and belonging to all classes of society, from the beggar to the wealthy merchant, were densely packed together up to the water's edge ; the pressure from behind continually pushed some people into the water, whose cries for help, joined to those of their friends still on the bank, were fearful to hear. In the middle of the river there were boats, rowed by soldiers, who seemed to take a demon-like pleasure in offering their assistance to the highest bidder, darting at a good offer here or there, which they would take into their boat,

beating down hundreds of eager hands with their swords, and rowing away to the other side. The wildest offers rang through the air. One apparently wealthy merchant held out a bag with 10,000 thalers for the man who would save his wife and two little children. A middle-aged lady held out a costly diamond ornament—worth, perhaps, twice that amount—for a boat to convey her and her daughter across.

The officer looked at the scene for a moment ; then, as a boat drew near the quay at the spot where he stood, he turned to his escort and bade them follow him to the water's edge and wait there. Then raising a shout, he made his horse rear ; the people between him and the water pressed away on both sides in mortal terror. In a moment all five were at the water's edge, when, plunging with his steed into the water, the officer swam to an approaching boat and spoke to the rowers. They pulled to the spot where Harry stood. A fearful struggle took place ; a hundred people pressed forward, but Harry was assisted to deposit his burden. A wail went up from those whom they left behind as they were rowed across and landed safely on the other side.

Their deliverer was already at the water-side awaiting them. His legs were dripping and he was without horse; but as soon as they had landed he hurried them on. Without once looking back at the horrible scenes which they had escaped, they followed him through row after row of tents, until, stopping before one, he requested them to enter. It was large enough to contain them all. As they entered, the pastor fell upon his knees and uncovered his head. The others followed his example, but his voice broke down, and for some moments nothing in the tent was heard but sobs.

When the pastor rose the officer stood by the entrance of the tent. He too had uncovered, and the upper part of his face, which had before been partially hidden by his helmet, was now plainly visible. He stood with his arms crossed on his breast, and a gloomy look on his face, regarding the devotion of those whom he had saved. Both the pastor and Harry, when they saw his face, gave a start.

"Theodore!" cried the old man, tottering and stretching out his hands. But the strength which

had hitherto supported him failed, and he sank down exhausted.

"Did you not recognise me at first?" said the Imperial officer with some astonishment.

"I knew the voice," replied Harry; "but we were all too bewildered to think of you. Besides ——"

"Yes," said Theodore, as he saw the other's hesitation, "I know what you intend to say. You did not expect to be snatched from the hands of death by one who is no longer among the living. You thought I was dead: I *am* dead. For this moment alone am I Theodore Wechter. When you leave me he shall go also. My name is Hochherz."

"Then while you are still Theodore, let me fervently thank you for your conduct this day. I know there is no friendship between us, nor do I accept deliverance for myself. If there be aught in which I have wronged you, I am here to answer for it; though, were it not unseemingly, I would pray your pardon. But these," pointing to the girl, who had drawn her father's head on to her shoulder, "God placed them in your hands."

"They are safe," said Theodore, somewhat curtly; "I have not exposed myself to Tilly's wrath in order that I might take their liberty or shed your blood. I am doing what has been strictly forbidden; but it matters little what the results are to me. I have ordered my servant to bring you some rustic clothes, disguised in which a farmer's cart will take you to Leipsic."

"Can you not fly with us?" said Helena, with faltering voice. "We should have a double reason to thank God if we could thank Him also for you. Let Hochherz die, and Wechter will find his father's arms ready to embrace him."

He shook his head, and as his glance rested upon the girl, it softened.

"It is better thus. A man can change once, but once only. Whatever the Stralsund burgher may have been, Tilly's cuirassier shall not forsake his standard."

These words were spoken so slowly and so deliberately, that neither the pastor nor the young Scot attempted to argue with him; feeling with the sterner instincts of man, and his deeper appreciation of character, that this was not a momentary

resolve. Not so Helena. She could not forbear exerting the power of that tender persuasion that formed so charming a part of her character. Again and again she besought him with tears ; and she related to him how, in her last hours, his mother had urged her, if ever she met Theodore, to give him her last blessing ; and how his father, broken in health and spirit, had fled from the scene of so many sad recollections, and, though silent, yearned for his son's presence. But it was in vain. There were tears in his eyes, and once or twice he seemed to struggle convulsively to suppress his emotion ; but it was too evident that he had formed his proud resolve and would not be moved. He had suffered. Those furrows on his forehead and those lines round his mouth had been ploughed by a sharp instrument ; but when the passing emotions left his face in its normal state, the pastor and Harry noticed with pity that his gloom and his sternness had deepened, and that he hurried into the excesses, the wild adventures, the tumultuous life of the cuirassiers, that he might escape from a more dreadful tumult within.

The interview became extremely painful, and

Theodore ended it by somewhat abruptly leaving the tent. In silence the fugitives partook of the refreshments that were offered them, and effected the desired change in their clothing. As the evening fell, the sounds of misery and ruin across the Elbe increased in horror and intensity, and gladly did the trembling and exhausted women mount the cart that had been provided for them at the extremity of the camp. Theodore they saw no more; and as they slowly wended their way towards Leipsic, the evening sky was illumed by the dreadful and lurid light of the flaming Bishop's-city.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WOE TO THEM.

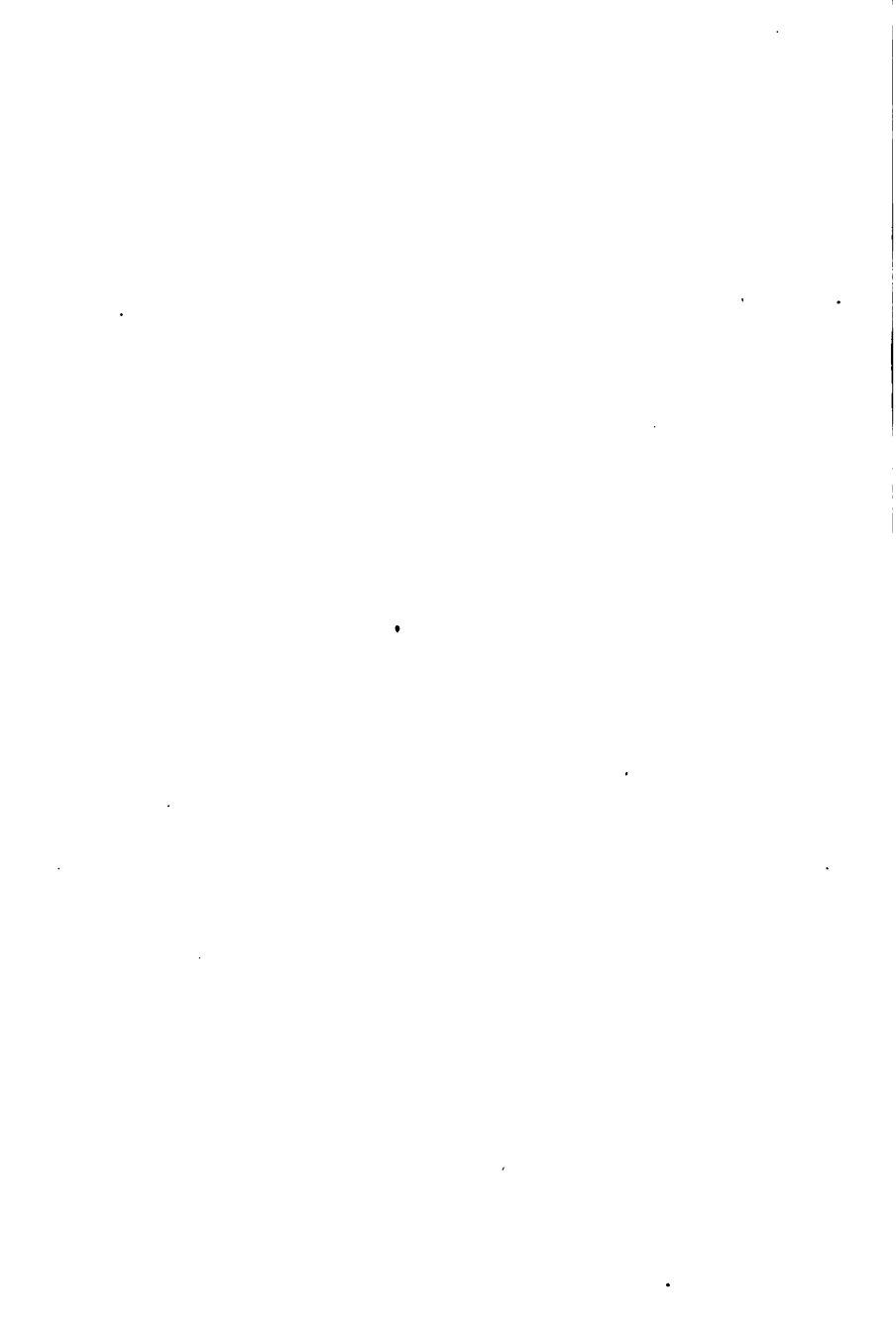
AFTER a terribly fatiguing journey of three days, during which time they were more than once exposed to great danger, Harry and his party arrived in Saxon territory, and once more breathed freely. They resolved, however, not to stop ere they had gained the Swedish army ; for only there, they considered, could they deem themselves perfectly safe. Accordingly, when they had rested for a day at the city of Wirtemberg, they procured a vehicle, as good as could be had in those days when the modes of conveyance were still in their infancy, and were soon approaching the Swedish camp, which was pitched not far from the Saxon frontier. As they were moving along in silence Harry on horseback, and the others in a clumsy cart, the driver, putting his hand to his eyes and looking before him, thought he saw a troop of horse approaching. And truly a cloud of dust appeared on the road, which, drawing nearer

and nearer, disclosed a score or so of horsemen, riding at a slow pace. Harry strained his eyes to discover who and what they were; but the sun shining in their faces, together with the dust, prevented him from seeing, except at almost the last moment, that the party was headed by the king himself. He had just time to turn round—for he was riding in advance—and to whisper the fact to those behind him, when they found themselves in the king's presence. He had already scanned the whole party from a distance, and probably made up his mind who they were. When he saw Harry's military salute, however, he pulled up; Harry did likewise, and the cart stopped, all its occupants uncovering.

"Whither is your journey, my good people?" asked the king, looking attentively at the pastor and then at Helena, whose pale cheeks became covered with a modest blush as her eyes met those of Gustavus; "and whence do ye come?"

"Our journey is sad enough, may it please your majesty," answered Pastor Hermann; "we are fugitives from the unhappy Magdeburg."

"What?" asked the king; "from the city or



from the province? Were you in the city when it was besieged?"

"We were, sire," answered the pastor; "we were in it when it was taken and sacked."

"And you, sir," said the king, turning to Harry, who was dressed as a farmer; "do you also come from that unhappy city? But methinks I have seen your face ere now; have I not?"

"My name is Harry Wyndham, sire," answered Harry; "captain in the late regiment of Lord Falkenberg's hussars, and I may say, one of the few survivors of the ill-fated garrison, and now at your majesty's command."

"Oho!" said the king; and a shade of sadness came over his face as he turned to General Banner by his side; "here, then, we have at least an eye-witness. Is it true, captain," he continued, "that our dear friend Lord Falkenberg is no more?"

"Your majesty," answered Harry, gravely, "Lord Falkenberg died the death of a hero, sword in hand, in defence of his post."

"Where were you at the time?"

"Not two yards behind him; and had I not

stumbled and fallen, I should undoubtedly have shared his fate. I have a commission to your majesty from Lord Falkenberg," said Harry.

"Indeed!" said the king, warmly; "what is it? I have no secrets before these gentlemen."

"It is no secret, sire," said Harry, sadly. He had dismounted, and stood before the king's horse.

"He asked me to pray you to accept this ring, which he was sure you would recollect. And he fervently hopes that your majesty will be guardian to his little son, and educate him as a faithful servant to God and your majesty."

The king silently accepted the ring, of pure gold, with a small but costly diamond which he had presented to Countess Falkenberg on the event of her marriage, at which he himself had assisted. He looked down upon it for some moments in silence, and Harry could see that he was deeply moved.

"Gentlemen," he said at last, turning to those around him, "we have lost one of our noblest and truest comrades."

There was a silence of some moments.

"Captain Wyndham," he resumed, "you have joined us voluntarily, like many others whose nobleness we prize highly. It is a sad thing in the eyes of God, as well as of men, that His cause should have to be sustained by such arms as we are now obliged to carry ; but, since it is so, I can give you no greater token of my regard than that I thank you heartily for your services. After you have refreshed yourself in the camp, I expect you and that worthy man and his daughter at my quarters, that we may hear some more particulars of what happened at Magdeburg."

The king moved on, and the cart was soon approaching the camp. Thanks to Colonel Hepburn, whom Wyndham visited immediately, and with whom he was acquainted, the pastor with his daughter and servant received excellent lodgings in the house of a farmer, not far from the king's own. Here they had ample opportunity of refreshing themselves ; and when the good-natured hostess heard that the "Fräulein" was to have an audience with the king, she insisted upon adorning her with all the finery of which she was possessed. As this would have made her look

very much like a doll at a fair,—an outward appearance which ill-accorded with the poor girl's mind,—she quietly but firmly refused all ornaments, and chose nothing but a black gown, which made her appear doubly graceful.

The king was alone when they were announced, and kindly requested them to be seated. He himself, as was one of his peculiarities, leaned on his elbow out of the window and scanned the beautiful landscape before him, which was now coloured with the mellow tints of an evening in May, the tips of the hills and the trees of the forest being covered with a profusion of gold which the setting sun threw upon them.

After some irrelevant questions, the king asked, "And when did Falkenberg give you that ring?"

"Allow me to tell you the whole affair, sire," said Wyndham. "I went to bed the previous night with a vague feeling that something terrible would happen. At the first break of day I awoke with a start, and not being able to go to sleep again, I rose, and leaving the house quietly, went to the Town-hall, where I found Lord Falken-

berg and another officer, named Schmidt, of our army. They were engaged in questioning the trumpeter whom Tilly had sent the previous night, and my lord seemed rather astonished to see me. I told him that I had a presentiment that the quiet in the enemy's camp boded no good. He looked very grave, and asked whether I thought that there would be much more fighting ere the king came to our relief; and I said that I believed there would be, as I knew that your majesty's army could not move forward in a hostile country so quickly as we expected. 'Then, captain,' says he, 'we'll take something to eat before our work.' Two or three times he seemed on the point of saying something; but as we were eating our breakfast, three shots of a mortar broke upon the silence of the morning. 'That's a sign for the assault,' says he, snatching up his sword and commanding Schmidt to fly to the cathedral and peal the alarm-bell; he ran with me to the barracks, and thence to the new town, where Papenheim's dragoons were already master of the gate, and beat us back. Seeing that we could not do much there, we turned to the other gate,

where Tilly's men were coming in, and it was then that he gave me this ring. Scarcely had he said the words which I have related to your majesty, when he fell down at my feet. Happily, I stumbled, and I felt the Imperial soldiers going over me. I managed to creep into a house and strip a fallen Imperialist of his regimentals; for seeing that the town was lost, I concluded that my only duty now was to look to the safety of my friends, who direly needed my protection."

"Woe to them! Tilly shall have to answer me for that," said the king, when Harry had finished his tale. "To think that in a Christian country, and by men who worship at least one common God with us, such fearful things should have been perpetrated, is hardly imaginable. Had I known what was to happen, I would have wished much to travel more quickly; for what will people say of a Christian leader who leaves his allies thus at the mercy of his enemy?"

He said these words almost to himself; but then, turning courteously to Helena, he said: "And you, madam, may be thankful to God that He has saved you from so fearful and horrible a danger."

"Sire," said Helena, in whose eyes tears had started when she heard the king's former words, "your piety and your courage can be suspected by no one."

The king looked kindly at her, and asked her whether she would object to belong to the suite of his queen, Eleonora, who was then expected to arrive every day. "You will there be more secure," he said, "than at any other place, while you will see more of the world."

Helena hesitated, and threw a look of anxiety on her father, who regarded her with a kind and proud smile.

"Ah!" said the king, noticing her look, "we will see to that! I will give orders to Oxenstierna to have you provided for."

Not long afterwards they withdrew.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MAGDEBURG AVENGED.

WE must now request the reader to step over an interval of rather more than a year since the terrible events related in our last chapters. That year had undoubtedly been one of the most eventful and important in the history of Germany. It witnessed the victorious progress of the Swedish king into the very heart of Germany—a progress which was alike remarkable for boldness of conception, rapidity of execution, and invariable good fortune. It witnessed, too, the terrible punishment which was inflicted upon the bloody destroyer of Magdeburg; it witnessed the defeat and ruin of the Imperial army, the conquest of the rich Electorate of Bavaria, that stronghold of Austria and hotbed of Popery and superstition, and the humiliation of the proud Emperor to such a degree that he was forced to call to his defence his bitterest and most dangerous enemy, the Duke of Friedland.

When Tilly had completed the ruin of the episcopal city so entirely that only two churches and but few houses remained standing, and fully two-thirds of its inhabitants had perished, he laid the country behind him waste. Alarmed at the approach of Gustavus, he once more hastened to Magdeburg and encamped in its neighbourhood, while the king lay with his army within twenty miles. All Tilly's endeavours to force the king into a battle were vain. The latter knew his inferiority in numbers; and as he expected reinforcements, he prudently declined a decisive contest till that time. In the meanwhile the Elector of Brandenburg had concluded an alliance with Gustavus, and the Elector of Saxony, who had hitherto been wavering, seemed inclined to follow the example. The Elector of Saxony possessed one of the finest of German States. He was at the head of the Protestant Union; but his army, large though it was, was not equal to that of Tilly either in strength or experience. He found himself in a difficult position. As head of the Union, he was loth to put himself under the protection of Gustavus; as Protestant prince, he

could not support the Emperor; as vassal of the Emperor he dare not seize arms against his liege lord. There were, too, elements at work round about him to make his decision more difficult. Some of his ministers were secretly in Austrian pay. His court chaplain, Dr. Hoe, of Hoënegg, a violent Calvinist, incited him to independence of action. The general of his troops, our old acquaintance, Arnheim, a sworn though secret friend of the ill-treated Wallenstein, and jealous of Pappenheim and Tilly, could not bear his present inactivity. Once already had the elector refused the king's request to join him. Then Tilly, who had watched him, and who desired to get at a decision, suddenly sent him a summons either to abstain from increasing his armament and troops, or to join him immediately. This turned the balance to the other side. The elector sent off two messengers: one to Tilly with a refusal, one to the Swedish king with a prayer for assistance.

Tilly, on receipt of the refusal, immediately broke up his camp, and marched with his whole army to Halle, and thence to Leipsic, both of which places fell into his hands. His course was

marked by the most frightful excesses, but, curiously, the two towns themselves were hardly mistreated. The elector, in the meanwhile, not confident of his own strength, had marched with his army towards Gustavus, and, driven by necessity and fear, was ready to submit to any conditions. But the king, whose upright and decisive character could not understand so lukewarm and equivocal a conduct as that of the elector, and who feared lest he might lose his ally as soon as the enemy left his territory, held himself at first as if he would have no connection with the elector. But when he saw that the latter was willing to accept any terms, he altered his tone, and on the 2nd of September, at the little village of Coswick, the treaty between the two potentates was concluded, and the two armies were joined.

Five days afterwards the two hostile armies confronted each other not far from Leipsic. After a long and obstinate struggle, the Imperial army was entirely routed and driven off the field. Covered with wounds, Tilly fled to Halle with scarcely six hundred men. He left the battle-field in the hands of the king, with a loss of seven

thousand killed, five thousand prisoners, all his artillery, his camp, and more than a hundred standards.

But there was still more in store for Tilly. When he had barely recovered from his wounds, he hastened with what had been left of his army to Southern Germany, and with all despatch and energy proceeded to levy a new one. It was not long before he was again in the field at the head of a powerful force, and burning with desire to recover the laurels which the northern hero had snatched from his head. Tilly's masters, the Elector of Bavaria and the Emperor, however, had both learned to be cautious by his late defeat. It was Tilly's desire to fight another battle,—the bloodier the better,—and to gain a complete victory over the intruder. It was their duty to protect the German territories. Another defeat would be fatal, and they had been taught that a battle was not the same as a victory. With tears in his eyes, Tilly read the command to abstain from a drawn battle, and much against his will he had to content himself with garrisoning towns, marching to the rescue of a besieged city to find it

already taken, and to withdraw when the enemy came too close.

From Leipsic to Erfurt and Weimar, from Weimar to Frankfort, from Frankfort to Nuremberg, did the king march with the loss of scarcely a soldier. The towns on his way opened their gates to him with rejoicing, the inhabitants willingly threw off the former yoke. The few cities that made a show of resistance were carried in one or two days. The troops of the Emperor were invariably routed; and after an easy and victorious march into the very heart of Germany, the king resolved to take up his winter quarters in the town of Mayence, which capitulated after a four days' siege, the greater part of the garrison taking service in the conqueror's army. Here, in the middle of winter, the king held his court, surrounded by princes and ambassadors, by his queen, and by the fugitive King of Bohemia. Every day news arrived of some important town having capitulated, of a general having routed an Imperial detachment, of a State having agreed to pay a subsidy. It was, indeed, a conqueror's

court, and there was ample ground for the belief that God favoured this undertaking.

On the 8th of March, 1632, when the weather had become sufficiently clement for further operations, the king decamped with his army for Bavaria, which lay open before him. At the end of the month he had made a public entry into Nuremberg, carried Donauwert, and made preparations to cross the river Lech and march across the frontiers of Bavaria to its capital, Munich.

At this epoch the Elector of Bavaria saw that the time had come in which he must oppose Tilly to the advancing enemy. For now as much would be lost by no battle as by a defeat. Tilly encamped on the right bank of the river, Gustavus on the left, which was much higher, and gave him great advantage. The result was even greater than had been either expected or feared. Tilly was killed, his trusty comrade Altringer dangerously wounded. Magdeburg had been avenged.

The Elector of Bavaria, who had thrown himself into the camp, retreated with the whole of his

force ere yet a man of the Swedish army had crossed, and abandoned a situation so strong that Gustavus, when he saw it, exclaimed, "I would never have forsaken so magnificent a position!" In the middle of the following month the king made his victorious entry into the city of Munich. Thus in less than two years had he marched from the shores of the Baltic to within two hundred miles of the Imperial City. He had defeated three of the greatest generals of the age; he had been received as a deliverer within all the towns in Northern Germany; he had entered those of the South as a conqueror without spilling any blood to obtain his conquest, and he had effected all this with but little loss. The way to Vienna lay open to him; the army that had opposed him was without a leader; the towns, terrified by his very name, were ready to open their gates on his appearance, and the days of the house of Hapsburg seemed to be numbered.

But an enemy more formidable even than Tilly here diverted the king's attention from a

road which he might otherwise have taken, and compelled him to retrace his steps in order to guard and protect what he had won.

Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland, whom we introduced in the beginning of our story, had undoubtedly been treated with great meanness and ingratitude by his Imperial master. Proud, imperious, and dangerously ambitious, he had yet rendered the Imperial cause immense services; but when the enemies of the Emperor had been vanquished, and the immediate want of the duke's army was no longer felt, he was dismissed with many protestations of gratitude and esteem, and deprived of the command of an army which he had principally raised at his own expense. He received the blow without flinching. With a smile on his lips, but his heart full of dark revenge and hatred, he retired to his estates in Bohemia, where, shut out from the world, and surrounded by regal magnificence, he awaited the ripening of those plans which he had long since made. The present circumstances only stimulated his activity, and in his solitude he was kept informed of everything that passed.

His overtures to Gustavus Adolphus to assist him in conquering Germany were refused in the beginning of the invasion. They were not renewed, but the duke resolved to extend his punishment to the invader also. At last the time arrived. Tilly died ; the army was without a commander ; the Elector of Bavaria a fugitive ; the Emperor was shaking on his throne. Ambassadors were sent to Wallenstein to offer him the post of generalissimo, and again and again they returned with a curt refusal. At last Wallenstein named his terms, and, to make a deeper impression, raised an army of 40,000 men in less than three months. Then he retired to await the concession of his demands. The King of Sweden was preparing to march to Vienna ; there was but one man to oppose him, and the Emperor saw himself forced to accede to his terms. The duke became generalissimo, with the sole power over life and death in his army. No one was allowed to enter or command it, not even the Emperor, except by his permission. And to him belonged the power *of doing with the conquered countries what he pleased.* Truly

there were two emperors in Germany then, and the one at the head of a powerful army was the mightier.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

WE find ourselves in the Swedish camp, before the walls of Nuremberg. It was a marvel of workmanship and fortification. A trench twelve feet broad and eight feet deep surrounded the whole camp, which was provided with walls, redoubts, bastions, gates, and breast-works, like a city. A hundred and fifty pieces of cannon defended the walls, while cleanliness and health were secured by the river Pegnitz which flowed through the camp. At the moment at which we enter it there is bustle and activity. The Chancellor Oxenstierna has arrived with an army of 50,000 men, composed of the new Swedish and German levies, and room has to be found for the greater part of them. Sixty cannon and 4,000 baggage waggons are as yet outside the camp, till sufficient space can be cleared for them.

Near this group of armament, which occupied

considerable ground, a regiment of cavalry had been stationed to protect and watch over the *impedimenta*, for the Croats of the Duke of Friedland were exceedingly bold, and would undoubtedly attempt to carry some of them away should they remain exposed. The officer who commanded this party, and who was no other than Harry Wyndham, had dropped the bridle of his horse on its neck, and was intently engaged in reconnoitring the horizon. In the distance his experienced eye could discern small volumes of smoke rising straight up to heaven. They were the camp fires of the Duke of Friedland's army,—in an equally strong position on the other side of the river; he being quite as determined as the Swedish king to see who would be the first to give in.

Wyndham had followed the king's victorious career, step by step, by the side of his friend Baverley. After the death of Lord Falkenberg they had obtained permission to exchange into the regiment of Colonel Lumsdell, a brave English officer who had come over with the king, and who showed himself, at the head of

his Scots, one of the coolest and most intrepid officers in the army. Much to the contentment of all parties, Helena had accepted the king's offer, and was attached to the queen's suite, where she was safe; while her father's health at last broke down after so many vicissitudes. On the removal of the court to Mayence during the winter of 1631-32, the pious old man, overcome by fatigue and the severity of the weather, sank rapidly. On the second day after his arrival in the city he found his strength giving way altogether; but although he knew his last days had come, he was of good cheer. On his death-bed, which was surrounded by Baverley, Harry, and Helena, he joined the hands of the two lovers; and then, as if his only trouble had been cleared away, he laid his head down with a gentle smile and passed away imperceptibly.

Harry had thus followed the king on his march, and they were now at Nuremberg. So intently was he gazing at Wallenstein's camp, that he did not notice the approach of an officer on foot who had issued out of the camp; and it was not till the well-known voice of Herr

Wechter greeted him, his hand patting the horse, that Harry knew of his approach. They had not seen each other since their last meeting in the camp at Schwedt. Three times had he been sent on a mission to Sweden, and each time on his return Harry or Baverley heard of his arrival and subsequent departure when it was too late. He had since then constantly been with Oxenstierna, who commanded the troops on the Rhine and had only returned with him.

"I was weary of all the din and bustle," he said to Harry, "and learning that you were here, I thought it would be refreshing to see a Stralsund friend again. I never expected to see you alive when I heard of the destruction of Magdeburg, knowing that you were part of the garrison; and you may thank God that He has pleased to pluck you and yours out of that fire. But tell me, how did it happen?"

Harry related how and by whom they had been saved from a fearful death. Herr Wechter sat on the grass, with his back leaning against a tree. There were tears in his eyes, and his face wore an expression of deep sadness. He grasped his

friend's hand, and pressing it firmly, said, "I thank you; I thank you very much. How I have prayed over that boy,—how I have watched over him! I thought I acted wisely, but I clearly see now I was too hard with him. The melancholy deed by which he separated himself for ever from us, did not surprise me so much as it did others. I knew his desperate temper. I watched his jealousy of you, and I pitied him deeply; for I saw myself that you had a greater right to the affections of that sweet maid than he."

"Think you that his blow was premeditated?" asked Wyndham.

"Nay, I think no act of his was ever premeditated. He had no control over his passions, but allowed them to guide him whither they listed. I have no doubt he was deeply sorry for it afterwards. Oh that I could but see him and speak to him again! Oh that I could but press him to my heart!"

When the worthy burgher rose and slowly returned to the camp, Wyndham looked after him and sighed. "Only a few miles between father and son!" he said to himself: "could they not

meet again? Were it not possible to send him a letter? So near, and yet so far!"

The position of the Swedish army at Nuremberg became unbearable. With every exertion and with the price in his hands the king could not obtain enough provisions for so many men. The thousands of pounds of bread that were daily carried from the town into the camp could barely satisfy the sharpest pangs of hunger. Horses died rapidly for the want of forage. Disease broke out everywhere and carried off more lives than would be lost by the bloodiest battle. It is true, ever and anon by a piece of good luck the Swedes increased their stores somewhat by the surprise of a convoy or the taking of a magazine. But, nevertheless the want became more pressing each day. The German soldiers and officers of his army began to rob and forage among the peasantry, and the example was speedily followed by the rest of the troops. Daily complaints from the citizens and peasants came to the king; and he grew angry and sad that even his own soldiers should at last be seduced to commit these excesses. He resolved to offer Wallenstein battle, and bring the matter to

a crisis. Accordingly, attended by three or four generals and a troop of Lumsdell's horse, to which Harry belonged, they set out to reconnoitre the country around.

They had not ridden for more than two miles when they came to a farmhouse which appeared to be totally uninhabited. The king halted, and with a stern voice commanded an officer to enter the house and see whether there were any people in it. The officer returned with a troubled face, and reported that he had found the body of a middle-aged peasant apparently quite dead, blood flowing from a wound in the head. All the cupboards and presses in the house had been broken open and emptied. With an exclamation of impatience the king alighted and, followed by his generals, entered the house. It was as had been described. The man lay on the floor with an old gun in his hand, having apparently fallen in defence of his property. It was plain that this was not the work of Wallenstein's people, but of his own. The king knelt down by the body, and seizing one of the cold hands, assured himself of the real state of affairs. He rose, and his face wore a look of deep anguish.

"Gentlemen," he said, in a low voice, turning to Banner and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, "I am afraid that God will turn away His face from us because of these things. I shall not rest until the culprits of this deed have been made an example of."

They remounted and rode on amidst general silence, directing their course to an eminence from whence the surrounding country might be overlooked and a correct view might be obtained of part of Wallenstein's camp. As they were leisurely approaching the summit of the hill, one of those who had been despatched to see that all was clear returned with the intelligence that a small party of soldiers belonging to a corps of the Elector of Saxony was actually engaged in pillaging a farmhouse at the side of the hill.

"Ha," said the king turning round, with a frown, to Harry, "Captain Wyndham! Down upon them; dead or alive, bring them here. Forward!"

In a few moments a cloud of dust enveloped the troop that swept over the summit and down the hill, like a mountain torrent, upon the pillagers. Never was there such a scramble as when the latter

discovered the approach of the cavalry. They were some twenty men strong, headed by an officer who in vain called out to his men to stop and defend themselves. Those outside the house, who were carrying loot, threw down what they had and made for the wood hard by, where the horses were tied together. Those inside jumped through windows, from roofs, and out of doors, and followed their comrades. Directing part of his men to the horses, Harry flew in amongst the few that had prepared themselves for a desperate resistance. Then, commanding some of his men to dismount and search the house, he remained outside. It was not long ere a shout was heard, and a figure fled out of the barn-door towards the wood, stooping down ever and anon to evade the bullets that were sent after him. Fortunately for the fugitive several of the horses of the pillaging troop had broken loose. In a moment the figure had caught one, jumped on its back, and was spurring in the direction of Wallenstein's camp. And now a race began. He was not a soldier—so much was plain; but what he was, was not easy to determine, for he rode exceedingly well, and flew along the field,

followed by half a dozen troopers, and was quickly out of sight. After some resistance the pillagers, who had heard of the king's presence, were bound, and, trembling for their lives, they were on the point of starting, when the party who had set off in pursuit of the fugitive came again in view.

"I have lassoed a curious prize, captain," cried one fellow, who had been in Spain and knew how to use the lasso. "Here's neither soldier, peasant, citizen, priest, nor student, Christian, heathen, man, nor beast. I've seen many an animal, but never a one like this."

And there, bound securely to the fellow's horse, and with a purple face in consequence of the lasso around his neck, dressed in the same beggarly clothes of three years ago, was the veritable gipsy who had so mysteriously crossed Harry's path twice before. For a moment the two eyed each other without moving a muscle. Then a faint smile came on Harry's lips, as he said, in English, "The tables are turned this time, Joe Marks. How is it your stars could not warn you of this? or did they?"

"No," said the Irishman very coolly, "I think not. It is all up with me now. But can't this

strap be loosened, I shall have another one on soon enough, anyhow." And he gave a short laugh.

Harry ordered the strap round his throat to be loosened, and knowing that the king was awaiting the issue of his expedition, he set out on his return. They found Gustavus Adolphus diligently employed in reconnoitring the surrounding country, of which a beautiful panorama lay before him. When he observed the party, the expression of his features became hard and stern. He ordered the prisoners to be brought before him, and the cavalry to form three sides of a square around them. They looked a pitiable lot as they stood trembling with bare heads and their hands tied behind them. He regarded them for a moment, and then called the officers to the front. Two corporals, a sergeant, and an ensign answered. The superior officer had already been killed in his own defence.

"You are the men that heap disgrace on my head, and cause alike my name and my cause to be cursed. You have given the example to

the soldiers, and of you therefore an example will be made."

He wheeled abruptly round, gave a short command to an officer behind him, and cantered off, followed by all except about twenty hussars and the five unhappy men. Not long afterwards the hussars again joined the party. A dreadful punishment had been inflicted upon the five men. They were hanging in front of the house which they had been pillaging.

"Tell me who and what thou art," asked Harry of the gipsy, whom he had contrived to get beside him. "Thou art a mysterious creature."

"As you see," answered the gipsy, "I am a poor beggar, and I have to get a living anyhow."

With this answer, however, Harry was in no way content. By adroit questioning and coaxing he managed to extract from the prisoner the following details of his life. His father had been an important member of the gipsy tribe, who having for some reason been compelled to fly, had crossed over from his native country,

Bohemia, to Ireland, where he married an Irish girl. He was their only child, and on the death of both parents, when still young, he determined to join his own people, where by his strength and the knowledge of English and French, which he managed to learn, he soon rose to great power in his tribe. He hinted that he had frequently been employed by Wallenstein's astrologer, whom we have already introduced, but in what capacity he would not disclose. At the commencement of the war he had entered the army for his own purposes, but a quarrel with Seni had separated them for ever.

I do not see much of that separation," said Harry, "since thou art at least in the neighbourhood of his camp as much as ever."

"Do you not know, young man," answered the gipsy, "that where the hunters are, there also is the carrion crow and the vulture? I am driving a warfare of my own now, and I know it is most profitable after all."

"But you are in the Imperial camp occasionally, are you not?" asked Harry.

"I might have been," was the cautious answer,

as the fellow looked at the expression on Harry's face from the corner of his eyes.

"And do you know its position?" Harry asked again.

"I know nothing," answered the gipsy firmly, evidently deeming his information thrown away.

This, Harry was convinced was untrue, but do what he might he could get no more out of the man. His threats were of no avail, for the fellow firmly believed that ere the night had passed he too would be hanged. All offers of reward were unsuccessful, for the same reason. The only thing which could have tempted the gipsy to make any disclosures was his liberty, and over this Harry knew he had no power. He had learned enough now not again to let the prisoner slip without authority.

That evening in his tent he slept but little. Suppose the gipsy knew all about the enemy's camp,—and it was most probable that he did,—could he not take a message or a letter to Theodore? This was most likely the only opportunity they would ever have of communicating.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE MESSAGE OF LOVE.

THE next morning at break of day Harry hurried out of his tent to the spot where he knew the prisoners, who had not been condemned to death, were confined previous to their transportation to the prison at Nuremberg. He found the gipsy soundly asleep on a horse-rug, and it needed some shaking to awake him. He rubbed his eyes and looked at Harry with astonishment.

"Answer me one question," said the latter decisively; "do you know the place where the 52nd regiment of Croats bivouac in Wallenstein's camp? Hark you, I am deeply grateful for the services you have rendered me, and I shall endeavour to procure your liberty, on one condition—that you will help me further. Do you think it is at all possible for me with your assistance to enter the camp, and speak to one

of the Croat officers? Never mind the risk for me, but is there any possibility?"

"No," answered the gipsy curtly; but he seemed for some moments swayed by doubts. At last he said, "If you do not mind the risk of being shot half a dozen times, I think it might be done."

"That will do," said Harry; and turning round he hurried away to Colonel Lumsdell's tent, to whom he explained who and what the gipsy was—neither spy nor soldier, but simply one of the many wandering vagabonds who travelled in the rear of Wallenstein's army. Then with his heart full of hopes he went to find Herr Wechter. With adroitness Harry turned the conversation upon the two armies that were confronting each other, and remarked that it was sad to think that many in the one had friends in the other with whom they could hold no intercourse, and against whom they might be compelled to fight ere long.

"Yes," said Herr Wechter, with a sigh; "would that there were communication between the two armies, although of course this is impos-

sible. I would send a letter to that boy of mine every day until I had him safe in my arms."

"Could you not send one now?" asked Harry.

"Send one now!" repeated Wechter, looking in amazement at Wyndham.

"Yes. Suppose some adventurer were to undertake the delivery of one, and saw his way to the execution of the plan, could you not write a letter?"

Herr Wechter shook his head, and looked as if he did not comprehend what was said to him; and was with difficulty made to understand that the opportunity he so much desired had come.

He listened with suspended breath. It was then arranged, and promised with glistening eyes to have a letter ready at dusk.

Thanks to Colonel Lumsdell, the examination of the gipsy ended very favourably. Harry had deemed it wise to inform the colonel of all he knew about him. As he spoke their tongue and had not been caught in plundering, but had been concealed in the barn, and as his own quick wit gave him a ready answer to every question, he

received a severe reprimand on the evils of vagabondism and idleness, and he was then handed over to the guard, who had orders to release him at dusk.

The whole of that day Harry was in a state of feverish excitement. He had determined at least to attempt what appeared next to impossible. He had resolved to surmount all obstacles and brave all dangers, that with his own hand he might bring Theodore his father's letter and speak to him and plead with him in person. It is true he had but small hope of inducing Theodore to desert and join the Swedish army. He knew that he occupied a very important post, and had probably been entrusted with secret missions,—for the Croats on their swift animals were useful in that respect. Still there was a chance of his resigning, and then father and son might return to Stralsund.

At last evening fell, and Harry and the gipsy found themselves outside the camp, each on horseback, the former with the old man's letter in his pocket. It bore no direction, in order not to inculcate Theodore, should it get into the hands of

the Imperialists ; and as it was sealed, Harry did not read it. It was better that the words between father and son, in which the former perhaps confessed that he too had been wrong, should not be revealed to any human eye but those for which they were written.

So completely did Harry trust to his guide, that he never for a moment entertained a thought of his endeavouring to play false. They conversed together, and were much more communicative than before. The gipsy himself began to talk about their present expedition.

"You must promise me one thing, captain," he said to Harry, "and that is that you will let nobody know what I am now doing. I do it solely out of gratitude to you ; and if it became known amongst the brotherhood, it might be fatal to me, and perhaps to you too."

"The brotherhood !" said Harry ; "what brotherhood ?"

"Brotherhood !" repeated the gipsy in a somewhat startled voice. "I spoke of no brotherhood !"

"Come, come, master gipsy," said Harry ; "you are going to trust me with a very important secret,

and you do not put enough faith in me to speak of a matter that is pretty well known in the world. You most decidedly spoke of a brotherhood, and I know very well that such an one exists. But I knew not that you were a member of it, nor that its decrees could be so fatal."

"Young man," answered the gipsy, once more turning towards Harry with that earnestness, almost haughtiness, which at times he could assume, "if I said brotherhood, I was not wrong. I meant tribe. But there *is* a brotherhood, and I am an unworthy member of it. What it does, what it is, what it professes, I cannot say; but that it has power over everything in this land and everybody, that much I will tell you."

"Except, perhaps, over him who rests over yonder, an' who is mightier even than your emperor," said Harry.

"Ha ha!" laughed the gipsy. It was a bitter, a hateful laugh, and he shook his fist against the place where dimly the camp fires of the Imperialists could be seen. "He! the villain, the dog! Mark my words. Ere my life is five years older, both these oaks will be felled by the hand

of the common woodman: The axe is sharpening, and the wielder—is not far off.”

As he said these last words he spurred his horse, and for the rest of the time remained silent. After they had made a great circuit, and forded the Pegnitz and the Rednitz twice, the gipsy halted, and then, requesting his companion to dismount, drew two pegs out of his pocket and picketed both horses in a spot where the grass grew thick.

“You must remain here,” whispered the gipsy, “until I return. See, here are the outposts of the Croats.” As he spoke he crept a few paces onward, and Harry, following him, perceived that they were on the summit of a hill, and that, at the other side, a fire was burning, surrounded by men. “I shall creep through, go to Wechter’s tent, and deliver the letter. Should I find it at all practicable for you to go, I shall come and tell you. At all events, wait here till I return, and give me the letter.”

Seeing that there was nothing else for it, Harry gave him the letter and waited. He waited long. At last a hand touched his arm. He started, but

was pushed down by the gipsy, who was wet with dew and breathed heavily.

"It's no use," he said; "you can't go. I, who am accustomed to this kind of thing, I'm tired to death, and have had a narrow escape twice. Besides, he won't see you. He says it's no good. But he has given me an answer. Here it is."

"What did he say?" asked Harry. "Did he read the letter? Could I not see him for a moment?"

"No," said the gipsy, decisively. "At first he laid it beside him. But when he took it up and broke the seal and looked at the handwriting he started, turned pale, and his hand shook like an aspen-leaf. Then he began reading it, and laying it down, and covering his face with his hands, and reading again. At last he began to cry like a child, and I pitied him. He remained with his head in his hands for a long while, and when he got up again he was quite calm, and wrote this answer. But he instructed me positively to tell you not to attempt to come to him."

Harry thanked the gipsy, and, under his guidance, returned to the Swedish camp.

The letter which he handed to his old friend was short, but full of tender expressions of regret for the past. It was not difficult to see that the haughty spirit had been broken ; and although honour and a soldier's instinct made it impossible to return, he prayed that some day peace might come, and that he might then feel his father's arms around him as of old.

CHAPTER XXX.

BEFORE THE BATTLE.

THE blow had been struck and parried. The Duke of Friedland's position had been attacked with all the impetuosity of the Scots regiments, the cool determination of the Finlanders, and the bravery of the Germans. During ten hours, regiment after regiment had marched up a steep height, at the summit of which a hundred pieces of cannon were awaiting them. When they arrived in the middle of the ascent, a flash of lightning was seen, a shock was felt as of a tremendous peal of thunder, a cloud of smoke for some moments enveloped the soldiers, and out of it the clang of swords and the rattle of musketry could be heard. When the cloud of smoke disappeared it disclosed the regiment in confusion flying down the hill pursued by Imperial cavalry, and leaving one-fifth of their number on the field of death. Every regiment was thus brought in-

to action. It marched resolutely up the hill, it received the terrific fire of the guns, it endeavoured to rally, it was met by a fearful discharge of musketry; a charge of cavalry, and it turned to fly from so overwhelming a force. And every hour during which the attack lasted two hundred corpses covered the scene of the struggle.

Convinced that Wallenstein's camp was impregnable, the King of Sweden at last resolved to relieve the city of Nuremberg from the fearful burden which it bore reluctantly. Leaving a sufficient garrison to protect it in case of a siege, he broke up his camp, divided his army into two parts, sent one into Franconia, and marched himself back on the way he had come, to complete his conquest of Bavaria. Five days later, Wallenstein followed his example. Without troubling himself about the city, he broke up his camp and retreated in an opposite direction. The way which he chose was marked along the horizon by the columns of smoke and the flames which shot up in the air. Every village he passed was plundered and burned; and the inhabitants of the city, much though they had suffered, were deep-

ly grateful for the protection which had saved them from such a fate.

Much though they had suffered, there had been no siege; there had been no violence perpetrated within the city; a battle had not been fought; with the exception of one attack, no blood had been spilt by the sword. And yet those three months which had been passed by the two hostile armies in sight of each other had been more fatal to either than a series of the bloodiest conflicts which it would have been possible to engage in. It is true the city had lost none of its property, and none of its inhabitants had been murdered; but nevertheless, its loss had been in proportion scarcely less than that of Magdeburg. The king's army had lost one-third, Wallenstein's more than one-half of its number, and for miles and miles around the city the fields had been converted into a huge burial-ground. That terrible enemy, disease, born from scarcity and privation, had dealt its blows indiscriminately and fatally.

Marching rapidly forward, the king once more appeared in Bavaria. An insurrection of the peasantry in Upper Austria cleared the way to

Vienna. Wallenstein, at the head of the only Imperial army, was in Saxony, and could not possibly have interrupted his march. Ingolstadt alone lay between the king and Vienna. Once more the Emperor trembled on his throne, once more the great prize seemed to be in the king's grasp ; when, to every one's astonishment, events interposed a second time between the idea and the reality. When on his march to Ingolstadt, the king received a packet from his chancellor Oxenstierna. It informed him that Wallenstein, while threatening the Elector of Saxony with the most frightful devastation of his dominions, at the same time artfully held out proposals for peace ; and that he was assisted in his plans by the elector's field-marshal, Arnheim, who had kept up a constant correspondence with his former chief, and who now used all his influence to draw the elector away from his alliance with the Swedish king. The latter at once saw that this would be a terrible blow to his progress. The elector was the most powerful and the most influential Protestant prince in Germany. His territory lay between the king and the Baltic. Should he turn

from an ally into an enemy, others were sure to follow, the king would find himself in the midst of a hostile country, and the issue would be impossible to foretell.

As soon as the king received this communication, therefore, he decided to prevent this calamity by uniting himself with the elector and forcing Wallenstein to a battle. He retraced his steps northward, passed by Nuremberg once more, effected a juncture with Bernard, Duke of Weimar, whom he had left in Franconia, and reached Erfurt and his queen the 28th of October, 1632, to bid her farewell before a decisive battle.

Harry had obtained permission to go to the city and take his leave of Helena; and his friend Baverley and Herr Wechter were to join them afterwards. He found his betrothed still dressed in deep mourning, and somewhat pale and sad; for her own sorrows had been heavy, and her sympathetic nature felt deeply for the loving and beautiful queen.

"You should not be sad and downcast," whispered he; "you should summon your brightest smiles, to give courage to her majesty."

Helena sighed.

"I have lost so much," she said," and I fear I shall lose so much more. I cannot smile."

Harry looked down upon her with tenderness; "I had so hoped that I might have changed that sombre black dress for one more gay, and that from the orphan I might have made you a happy wife. I cannot bear the thought of your position should I fall in the battle."

"And let us think of the poor queen, Harry, for assuredly she would be in a far worse position than I. Suppose the king were to die, what would she do, in this strange country, and surrounded by those who had been subjugated by her husband's sword? There is a feeling within me as if something was going to happen!"

"Nay," said Harry, "I feel so confident that he will be victorious, that I am almost impatient."

"When I saw him alighting from his horse just now," said Helena, "and beheld his warlike form going into the house, a curious feeling came over me, and it was as if my heart was pressed by a heavy load. God grant that he may be spared to us! But whom have we here? Dear Herr Wechter!"

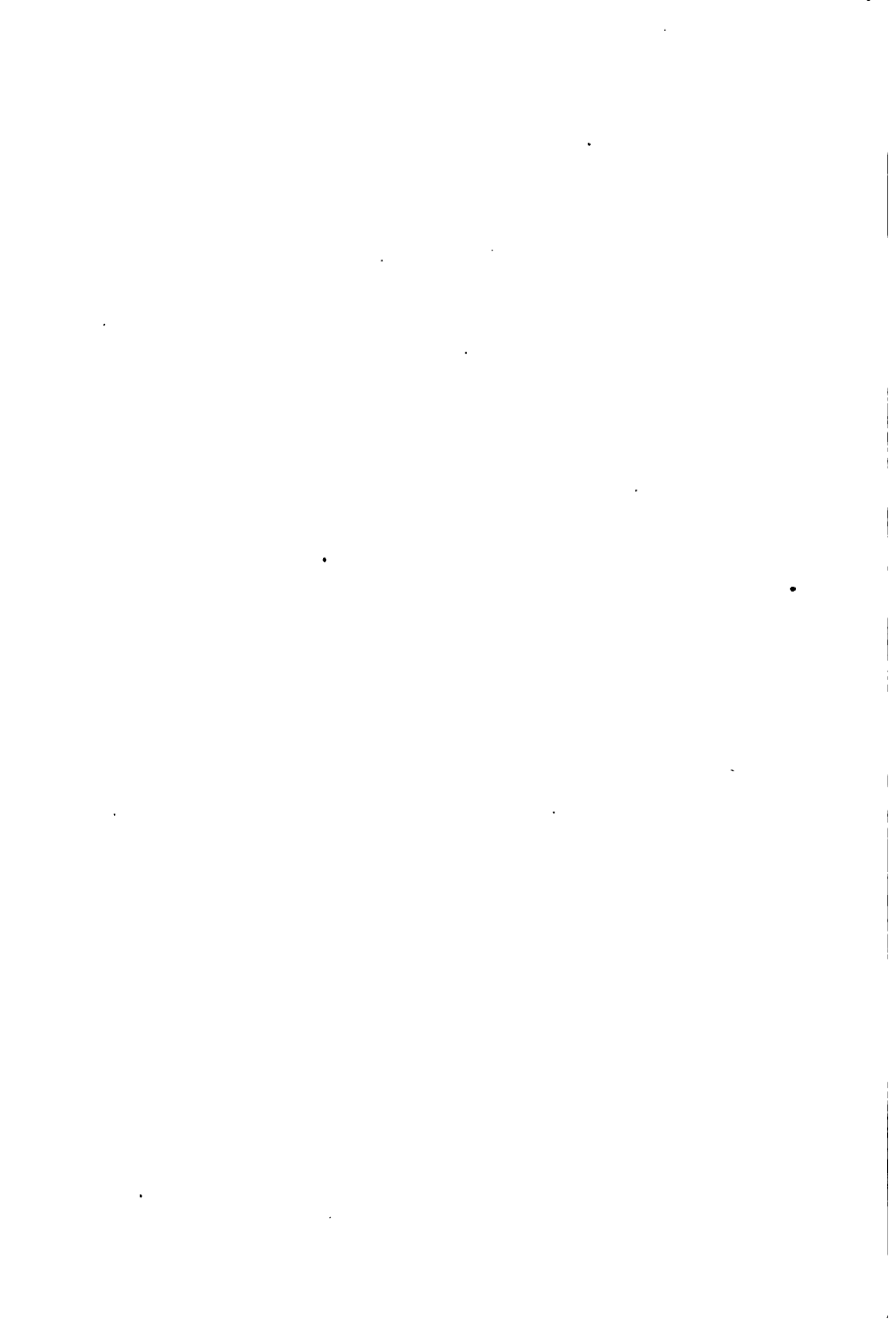
At this moment Herr Wechter and Bayerley appeared before the house, and greeted Helena through the window. The appearance of the old man, whom she had scarcely seen since their departure from Stralsund, made her forget even Harry. She rushed to the door of the apartment, into the arms of her guardian, and, overcome with emotion, laid her head upon his shoulder and wept. When she had become sufficiently calm, he led her to a seat, and taking one beside her, commenced relating to her his vicissitudes. When he had thus been engaged for some time, Herr Wechter took her hand with a solemn mien and looked at her in silence.

"All flesh is grass," said he, reverently, "and who knows whether any of us will live till to-morrow." There was a pause as the old man looked at his friends earnestly.

"Helena, my dear," he said, taking her hand and patting it gently, like a father, "I am old and shall not live long. But I am your guardian, my child, and if I should be taken away from you, you would have no other. Now it struck me that as both Harry and William might



Helena and her guardian.



be killed in the battle—for a battle there assuredly will be ere the month is out,—it would be very wrong of me as guardian to leave you without some provision.”

Harry and Helena looked at each other with disquietude.

“I am old,” exclaimed old Wechter, “and not likely to live much longer. But God has blessed me with means, and I am thankful to say I have spent the greater part of them in His service. But it has also pleased him to take away my wife and my son; and so I look upon you, Helena, as my daughter, and I hope earnestly that I may soon look upon Harry as my son. I have left instructions in Stralsund that you are my heiress, and I have appointed as guardian in my stead my noble friend the chancellor. I only thought it was right to tell you this now,” he added, with simplicity, “because we may not meet here on earth again. I shall not be long on earth, but for you, my dear, there may be a long life in store, in which you will always strive, I hope, to be a light shining freely to the glory of your Maker.”

Helena took his hand and covered it with tears.

All were deeply moved. The solemnity of the occasion, the certainty of the approach of important, of perhaps fatal events, imparted a double feeling of sadness to these last moments.

Not long after, the three men followed the king as silently he rode to join his army, which had been left at some distance from the town. And Helena went quietly to fulfil her duty with the sorrowing and all but inconsolable queen.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE BATTLE OF LUTZEN.

A THICK, impenetrable fog hung over the earth when, on the 16th of November, 1632, the sun rose above the horizon. The inhabitants of the little town of Lutzen, if any had remained, on looking out of their windows on that morning, would not have been aware of the presence of anything unusual had not the noise of arms, the sounds of military commands, the sharp notes of the bugle, the beat of the drum, the neighing of horses, which fell upon their ears through the veil of mist, taught them that not far off two hostile armies were drawn up opposite each other, and that ere the sun had again risen, one of these would have been driven from the field.

After leaving Erfurt, the king had advanced with rapid marches to the town of Naumburg, which is situated at a distance of about thirty miles south-west of Leipsic. Here he received

welcome intelligence. Wallenstein was totally unaware of his approach; but more than that. After having called a council of war, the duke had resolved to go into winter quarters in Saxony. His army was distributed over the different towns in the neighbourhood, and Pappenheim had been despatched with about 14,000 men to the relief of Cologne, which was at that moment being threatened by the Dutch. No sooner was the king informed of Pappenheim's march to Cologne, than, breaking up his camp at Naumburg, he advanced with the whole of his army towards Wallenstein, resolved to force him to a battle, now that he had been weakened by so large a detachment. The duke, taken entirely by surprise, hastily collected all his forces from the neighbouring towns and villages, took up a position on the plain of Lutzen, and sent a flying messenger to Pappenheim, with strict orders to come back immediately and join him in the battle. On the evening of the 15th, Gustavus Adolphus arrived with his army on the opposite side of the plain, the high road from Lutzen to Leipsic running between the two

armies, and drew up his forces in order of battle. In the night, Wallenstein had the cleverness to possess himself of this road, dig deep trenches, and fill them with musketeers. In the meanwhile, the King of Sweden, the Duke of Weimar, and General Knipphausen were passing their time in the king's coach, discussing the order of battle, the plan of attack, and making dispositions as to the future.

We find Harry and William posted on the right wing, which was commanded by the king in person. The Swedish army was drawn up in two lines, one behind the other—and their regiment, which had been assigned a place in the second line, was stationed on a little eminence, from which a magnificent view of the whole field could be obtained. The fog, however, now enveloped everything in its impenetrable folds, and threatened to destroy the chance on which the king had depended—that of beating Wallenstein ere Pappenheim could have reached him. The two youths had passed the night by their horses wrapped in their cloaks, and had slept as soundly as if lying on a bed of down.

"If this fog continues," said Wyndham, "it will be impossible to fight. I can just distinguish the rear of the Swedish cavalry from here. See! they are mounting. Whatever for, I should like to know? Ha, they cheer! It must be the king!"

"I think it is," answered Baverley, bending over his horse's head. "Methinks the fog is becoming thinner. Is yonder the king, colonel?"

Colonel Lumsdell looked sharply, and moved his horse a few steps forward. "Yes," he said; "I can hear his voice. He is not far from us, either. Close up there!"

The ranks were soon formed, and the regiment stood immovable, awaiting the approach of the beloved leader. But he came not. It was now clear day, and had been so for some three hours, and yet scarcely anything was visible but the immediate surroundings.

"Here it comes at last," said Harry, as the sun broke through the mist, and a gust of wind blew the fog, as if in clouds, before it. In a few moments the whole field lay stretched out before them, the long lines of horses and

men, with their glittering polished helmets, cuirasses, and arms, and gay banners reaching far away into the distance; at the same time the army of the duke became visible on the other side, the white and dusty road lying between them. The men drew a deep breath, and involuntarily the horses trampled and snorted and moved closer together.

"See! there's the king, right in front of us," said William, pointing in that direction. "He is sitting on a white horse. Don't you see him? Now he dismounts; he kneels down." As if by an irresistible impulse, and following the example of the Swedish cavalry before them, they dismounted, uncovered, and sank on one knee. In a few moments every soldier followed the example, and the whole army was on its knees before the Lord of hosts. At the same instant the bands of the different regiments began to play, and the solemn and stirring tones of that magnificent hymn of Luther, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott," burst upon the stillness of the morning. But through it, as if he could not allow this to happen

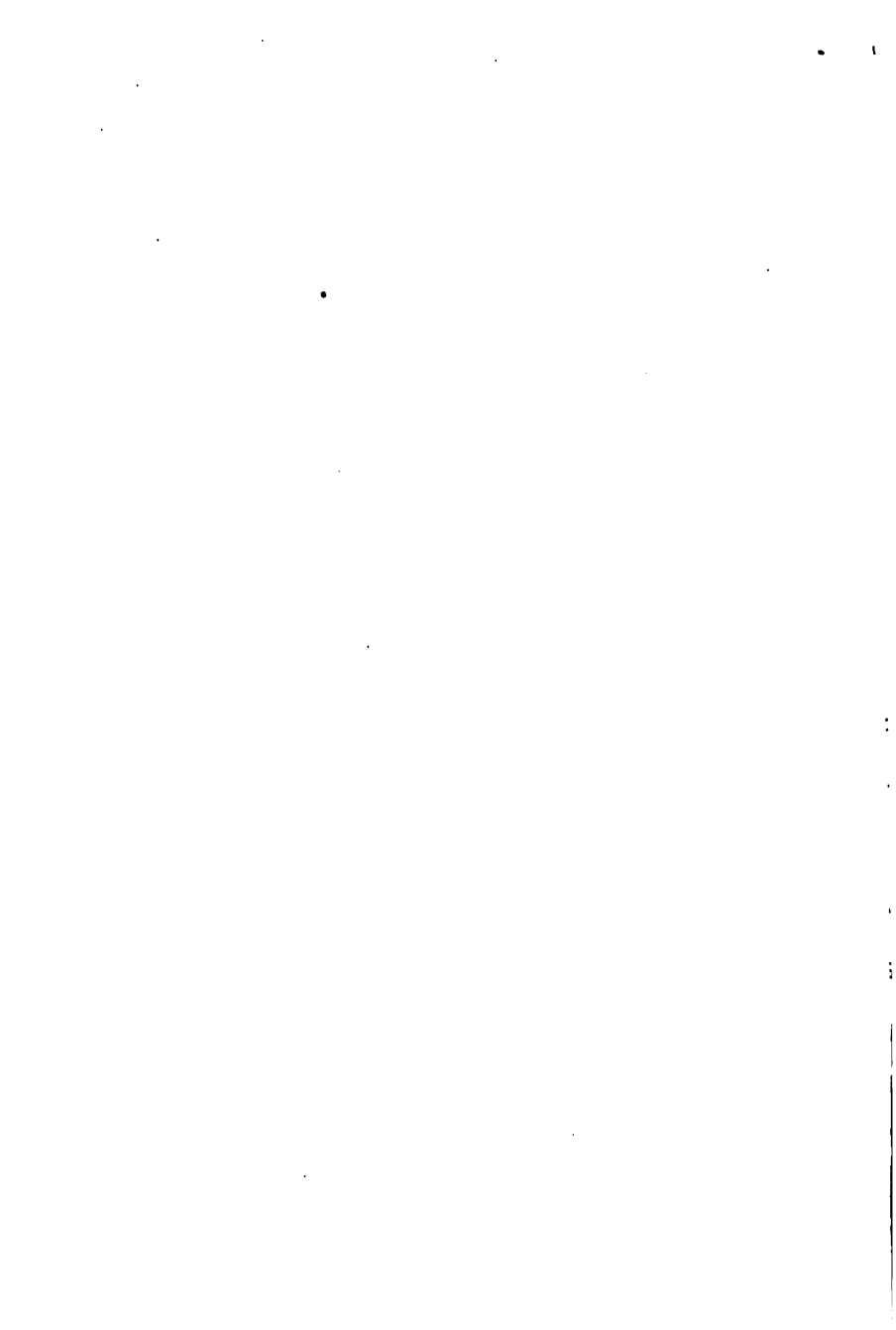
without opposition, the tones of Wallenstein's trumpets were heard, blowing a light and trivial march.

The king rose and, remounting, rode slowly past the different regiments, giving each of them a hearty and inspiring word. As he reached Lumsdell's regiment he halted, and viewed with evident satisfaction the fine appearance which it presented. "For you, brave Scots," he said, "I have reserved the difficult post of waiting until I shall want your irresistible charge to make the scales turn in our favour." A tremendous cheer burst from the men, and the king moved on to the front.

"See! they have set fire to Lutzen," cried Harry, who suddenly caught sight of the distant smoke and flame as they rose up into the air. "I suppose they are afraid of our taking it and planting a battery in it. Hallo! What is this? Knipphausen's infantry is marching against the trenches on the side of the road. See how well they march; it looks as if there were but one man stepping! See! yonder officer at the corner is Karl Weber, whom we met last night.



Before the battle.



See! he is turning round to his men, and points with his sword to the trench."

"They have taken both!" ejaculated Baverley with a joyful surprise. "Bravo! old Knipphausen. The Imperial musketeers are running helter-skelter towards the battery. I wonder it does not fire. Ah!" said William, giving the glass back to Harry, with a shudder; "did you see that discharge? I saw Karl Weber fall and the men waver. Have they taken to flight?"

"Not at all," said Harry, after a long look; "at least, I don't think so, for there is a cloud of smoke just now. No! they have taken the battery. See! look what a fight they are having with the gunners! There they run as fast as their legs can carry them. Oh! I feel as if we shall win this battle. I am growing quite impatient to have a hand in it.

"Never mind," said William; "we'll have plenty of it yet. See! there is the king, with his cavalry sweeping across the field. I can see the Croats moving closer together. There they go. What a shock it will be! I can see

his white horse prancing in the front rank. What a splendid body they make!"

"Can you see who that officer is, riding by his side?" asked Harry of the colonel, who at a few yards from them was regarding the scene.

"It's that Duke of Lauenburg," answered the colonel. "I wonder what could attract the king to that fellow. A more crafty, less straightforward man I have seldom seen. There are the Croats and the hussars flying like chaff before them. Do you see? We have beaten them on two points now.

"Not yet," said William. "Do you see the trenches by the road? Look! Knipphausen's men are wavering. They can't stand against that cavalry. See! As I am alive, there's Wallenstein himself cheering his men on,—there, on that piebald horse. Ha! what a fight! Fearful!"

So it was. The regiments led by Knipphausen, which had taken the trenches and the battery, were now opposed by Wallenstein himself with infantry and cavalry. There was, in the middle of the field, one dark mass of human beings, surging to and fro; no shots, no smoke, only the clash of

the sword and the gun as it descended upon the armour. At last Knipphausen's men wavered. Every one looked on with suspended breath, when the colonel in sudden alarm pointed to the right wing of the field, which the king had but lately traversed with his squadrons. A white horse was seen galloping without its rider.

"The king's horse!" "The king is wounded!" "The king is dead!" were the various ejaculations uttered as the regiment of Finlanders in front of them, uttering one cry,—a cry of agony, of despair, of revenge,—came running in one compact mass towards the spot where already a bloodier conflict than the one described above was taking place for the body of the king. It seemed as if that spot had become the centre of the field, where the object of all hopes and fears lay buried under a heap of slain. From every side battalion after battalion, regiment after regiment, came up to dispute its possession.

Lumsdell's men, who had up to this moment been calm witnesses of all that passed, when they heard the roar of the regiment before them and saw them dashing over the field, became impa-

tient, and were already pressing forward, when their chief himself turned round,—

“Not one of you must stir,” he cried; “remember the king’s last command. We must wait. The Duke of Weimar takes his place. See! he has again taken the battery. Wallenstein’s picked troops have fled. Our men are advancing on all sides. Stand, and wait for orders. Even in his death the king must be obeyed.”

These words accomplished their object. The men were quiet, though the expression of their faces showed that they were anything but satisfied. It seemed that everywhere the Imperialists were flying before the king’s troops, when suddenly a fearful explosion, followed by another and another, rent the air. The whole field paused for a moment. Then the Imperialists, behind whom the explosion had taken place, turned round and fled in confusion. Their powder waggons had caught fire and exploded.

“What is it? Pappenheim? our artillery? or what?” asked Harry. “See how they are flying! The field is ours. I only hope the king is not dead.”

"So do I," answered William ; and both remained silent, wrapped in sad thoughts.

"What ! . It can't be ! And yet, if I am not mistaken, *that's* Pappenheim !" ejaculated the colonel. "Now there'll be work for us. See how the soldiers rally ! It must be he."

At this moment an adjutant came galloping up and spoke to the colonel.

"Now then, my men," said he, turning round ; "now's the time for you. Pappenheim has arrived on the field, and we are to be opposed to the greatest cavalry general in the world. Forward !"

And away they dashed towards the *mêlée*. The battle, all but won, was beginning afresh ; and every inch of ground, already covered with so many dead and wounded, had to be once more contested.

The sun at last set upon the bloody day. The exhausted troops, no longer able to distinguish betwixt friend and foe, withdrew, uncertain whether the contest was not again to be renewed on the following day. Two great heroes had fallen ; each army had lost its idol ; and each, as it retreated, did so with gloomy sorrow. It was no longer an

uncertainty amongst the Swedes that their beloved king had fallen and was no more. It was whispered about, and men repeated it with set teeth, that he had fallen by a traitor's hand. Some named the Duke of Lauenburg, others his page, both of whom had been close to him, but no one spoke with certainty ; and but for the great fatigue of the troops and the uselessness of a search by night, they would have rushed once more to the field to find at least the body of him whom they had loved so deeply.

The Imperialists, too, had sustained a great loss. Pappenheim, when he arrived on the field, was not aware of the death of the king ; and, burning with desire to encounter that great opponent, he spurred his horse to the thickest of the fight, convinced that he was to be found there, if anywhere. He received a wound in the breast, a second soon after pierced his lungs. Bleeding, and almost exhausted, he still pressed on, till some of his own soldiers seized him, and, at the danger of their own lives, drew him out of the fight. When in the rear, he heard that Gustavus had already been slain.

"What !" he cried, leaning on one arm on the

litter on which he lay ; "is he dead ?" His eyes brightened, and a smile passed over his face, on which the pallor of death had already begun to settle. "Now I die happy, since my greatest enemy is no more."

Such was the end of that man. With words of bitter hatred on his lips he was struck down on the path which he had chosen. When he fell, the Imperialists, whose courage had revived at his coming, began to lose all heart. In vain did Wallenstein throw himself amongst the wavering lines, exhorting, commanding, beseeching—with tears, with flaming eyes, with curses. In vain did he cleave a fugitive's skull with his own hands. The charge of the Swedes became more and more furious. Darkness alone saved the Imperialists from a total rout. Under cover of the night they retreated in good order to Leipsic.

The battle-field remained in possession of the Protestant forces,—but at what cost ! Nearly two hundred years later, in 1813, the same fields witnessed another struggle between armies more than twice as numerous. But the Germans and Russians, when confronted by Napoleon, lost little more than

the Germans and Swedes when opposed by their own brethren. And yet, though dearly bought, posterity would not have grieved over these losses if Germany had thereby secured the ascendancy of Protestantism and liberty. But 1632 was followed by fifteen years of warfare, and during that period, not only liberty and Protestantism, but religion itself, was all but lost to view. It was sad that a great king had fallen; but it was vastly sadder to think that he had fallen in vain.

CHAPTER XXXII.

RECONCILIATION.

THE Duke of Weimar, who had now assumed the command of the Swedes, had also withdrawn his troops from the field ; but he remained with his army within two miles of it, and there allowed his exhausted soldiers some rest. There was no rejoicing amongst them over the victory, though the battle had undoubtedly been won by the Swedes. There were no sounds of merriment and of song around the fires ; there was silence, or fitful talk with subdued voice, for they knew that not far from them lay the body of the great king ; while the queen, spending the weary hours in tears, was swayed to and fro in an agony of suspense : the loving heart could not as yet believe that he was no more.

Not far from one of the camp fires, which some of Lumsdell's men had lit, and round which, considerably thinned in numbers, they were assembled, Wyndham and Baverley were leaning against a

tree. They had been in the thick of a truly murderous fight. The former had had his horse killed under him, and was only saved from being crushed under its weight by one of his own men. His head was bandaged, and his arm was in a sling. Bayerley's helmet was pierced by two bullets, and a strip of plaister on his cheek showed where another ball had grazed it. But the two friends had been miraculously saved ; and while in the whirl of the battle they saw friend and foe falling around them, they came out of it comparatively unhurt, and thankful.

"And are you quite sure you saw him?" asked Bayerley.

"As sure as I am that I see you before me now," answered Harry. "We had just received orders, as you recollect, to oppose the new regiment of Croats that had taken possession of that hill, when I recognised the uniform of his regiment. A few moments afterwards I was in the thickest of the charge, and there he was before me, with a face as pale as death. Only for one moment, when our eyes met, did a faint flush come to his cheeks ; but spurring his horse in a different direc-

tion, I lost sight of him. Presently he was close to me again. I saw one of my men aim his pistol at him. I tried to beat it out of his hand, but could not. In another instant I saw poor Theodore fall backwards from his horse. He put his hand to his breast, and I almost think there was a smile on his face as he fell. Of course all this happened in less time than I can tell it in. The next moment my horse was shot, and I nearly shared Theodore's fate. But I know the exact place where he must lie, if he has not been taken away."

"And do you think we would be able to find him, if we went to-night?" asked William. "He may not be dead, you know; and perhaps prompt attention to his wound may save his life."

"I shall go and ask leave," said Harry. Bayerley in the meanwhile collected a few things in a bag, and choosing two men from the fire, ordered them to get ready four horses. Not long afterwards Harry returned with leave, and the four horsemen were speedily on their way to the battle-field. It was, however, necessary to use some caution, as some of the Imperialists might have returned for

plunder, in which case, as they would probably number more, our two friends and their attendants might run great risk. A considerable time ere they reached the actual scene of the contest, they became aware of its vicinity by the smell of powder and blood. As they came to the outskirts of the field, they perceived several lights wandering to and fro in the darkness.

"Do you think we need be afraid of any enemies?" asked Harry.

"Well, there are the only enemies that we need fear," answered William, pointing to the lights. "They are the birds of prey that alight upon the victims after every fight. I do not think we need be afraid of the others. Wallenstein is by this time in full retreat, and I should not wonder if he had reached Leipsic already. Where is the spot? Could you indicate it?"

"Yes," said Harry, pausing, and with his hand to his forehead; "yonder is the town of Lutzen; here is the canal; there are the windmills. We must have been standing over there, and exactly opposite he must have fallen. Have you brought a torch with you?"

William had one, and after lighting it, they proceeded slowly on their perilous way.

"This must be the spot," said Harry, pausing and looking round. The moon, hidden behind watery clouds, threw a dim light on the scene.

"Harry! You must be mistaken!" said William; and he added in a whisper: "This is the middle of the field. See! there's the battery, and yonder the trenches! The king is lying here. See! here is the regiment of Uplanders, yellow and black!"

It was true. Harry had made a miscalculation, and they found themselves on the spot where the hottest fight had taken place. As they approached slowly, several of the wandering lights vanished, the plunderers taking to their heels. That it had been the scene of an obstinate contest could easily be seen. The trenches were filled with corpses. Even on the field they lay three or four thick, and around the guns it was frightful. There lay a whole regiment of Upland infantry in their yellow and black uniforms, in the same order as they appeared on the field, as if a gigantic scythe had mowed them down and left them, like the sheaves of wheat in harvest-time.

Harry now soon found the direction in which to go. They branched off to the left, and approached in reality the spot where he had seen the young Stralsunder. As they drew nearer, a solitary light burned before them with steadier flame.

"Ha!" said Harry, "some thief there is busy at work. We'll catch him." And ordering the two soldiers to make a circuit, so as to prevent his escape that way, he noiselessly approached the spot, William following up in the rear. Suddenly they were all startled by an exclamation from Harry as he rushed towards the light. Immediately following his movement, while drawing his sword, William was at the place in a few bounds.

Amidst a circle of silent and cold companions lay the body of a youth in Imperial uniform, half-supported by the body of a horse. By his head a torch had been placed in the earth, and its flame was blown hither and thither by the wind. And there, by the side of that youth, on his knees, lay the form of old Wechter. His face was turned up to heaven, and upon it there was a smile so sweet, so tranquil, that it seemed to re-

flect the calmness of heaven. The youth's left hand was locked close in his grasp. It seemed as if the old man were invoking a blessing upon him. But his lips did not move; his eyes were closed; his face was cold. All means to restore him were in vain. He was dead. But neither father nor son could have been dead long. What passed between them, as both stood upon the brink of the grave? The father's smile told its tale; and the expression of the son's face, at once sorrowful and calmed, assured the two friends that they had been re-united at the last hour.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE END.

THE body of the king had been discovered the day after the battle, almost on the spot which Baverley had indicated. It was found, covered with wounds, stripped of all its ornaments, arms, and most of its clothes, under a heap of slain. Having been conveyed to Weissenfels, a town not far off, it was embalmed and laid out in state. It was there visited by all the soldiers; and many a tear was wiped away when the beloved face was looked upon for the last time. In the meantime, the Chancellor Oxenstierna, who was on the Upper Rhine when the battle of Lutzen took place, arrived in Weissenfels, and, for the moment, took the reins of government.

By the death of the king the state of affairs had become totally changed,—so changed, indeed, that neither William nor Harry could come to an immediate decision what to do. As it

was feared that Poland might make an attempt to stir up an insurrection in its favour in Sweden, now without a sovereign, it was resolved that Gustavus's daughter, Christina, a child only six years old, should be proclaimed queen, and that a council of regency should be appointed, with the bereaved wife at its head. As soon, therefore, as the lying in state could be ended, the body was to be carefully removed to Stockholm, where the unfortunate queen would join it. Helena, who had as yet followed the queen, was hereby compelled either to go with her to Sweden, or to remain behind, totally alone in a strange city. Maidenly reserve prevented her from consulting Harry upon the subject; and thus, when the intention of the Court had been made known to her, she was in no small anxiety and tremor as to the course which she ought to take. She had hoped that Harry would speak of it himself that day, but she only saw him for a few minutes. Her guardian, the chancellor, was absent in the army, and thus, what was she to do?

In the evening, Harry and William desired

to have an interview with her. When she entered the room she saw by their faces that they had something of importance to communicate. She was not long kept in doubt. They informed her that they had looked at their new position calmly, and that they could come to but one conclusion. They had lately received a letter from home, from which they could infer that the old people longed to see them again. At the same time, the altered state of affairs in Germany had considerably decreased their wish to remain in the army. It would now become as much a war of politics and intrigues as of battles. With a council at the head of affairs, actions must necessarily be slow and often indecisive. They had therefore resolved to take their dismissal and go home; "but not," added Harry, in a soft voice, "unless you come with us." What Helena's answer to this was, we cannot say, as William, the only witness, unfortunately turned to the chimney at that moment to contemplate an interesting picture. Enough,—Harry and Helena were married the day the weeping queen left for Stock-

holm; and in the archives of the Wyndham family there is a somewhat voluminous document by another Helena, beyond doubt a daughter, which relateth much of this history. It speaketh of their reception by the old folks, and the rejoicings that were held in honour of the beautiful foreign bride; and as there is attached a long table of descendants, it may be inferred that they were happy and blessed.

Ere we close, it may not be amiss to say a few words as to the issue of that great war part of which we have endeavoured, though but imperfectly, to describe. After the king's death, a period of inactivity followed. It is true small battles were fought, but the end of the war seemed as far off as ever. In 1634, however, an event happened which may be said to have been a death-blow to the Imperial cause. The Emperor Ferdinand, surrounded in Vienna by Wallenstein's jealous and powerful enemies, was soon persuaded that his inactivity was the result of treachery. It was said that he was secretly negotiating with Sweden and France for a peace;

that, ambitious as he was, he aspired to the crown of Bohemia; that ere long he would turn that powerful army of which he was the sole head against the Emperor, who would thus be at the mercy of the traitor. Whether these charges were true or not, is even now a question of dispute; but it cannot be doubted that there were grave suspicions against the ambitious, the revengeful, the powerful but inactive Duke of Friedland. By order of the Emperor, he was assassinated at Egra in 1634. At first it seemed that fortune was now entirely on the side of the Emperor. The Swedes suffered a terrible defeat at Nördlingen in the same year, whereby all their former victories seemed to be negatived. The following year the wavering Elector of Saxony, true to his disreputable policy, made a separate and secret peace with the Emperor, and was followed by many of the smaller princes. But when need was highest, help was nighest. From that moment, as if disencumbered, the Swedish army, under their brave generals, — Banner, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Wrangel, and Torstensohn, — were everywhere

victorious. In 1647 the Lech was once more crossed, and the Swedish and French armies, which now conducted the war together, poured into Bavaria. In their return they committed the most frightful ravages. The north of Germany had suffered so much already, that scarcely anything to plunder was left. The south now had its share of suffering. The piety and strict honesty of the Swedes had long since departed. Where formerly people prayed, "Deliver us from the Imperialists," they now prayed, "Deliver us from the Swedes."

When, in the following year, 1648, peace was concluded, it was solely because the German people, powerless, prostrate, bleeding, cried aloud for a cessation of that terrible war which had devastated their country for thirty years. Assuredly, those who began it knew not the end. Not one of them was alive. The Emperor, King Christian, Gustavus, Wallenstein, Tilly, Pappenheim, Richelieu, James I., they were all gone. And a century afterwards the ruined villages and towns of that large empire spoke of the terrible waves that had broken over it.

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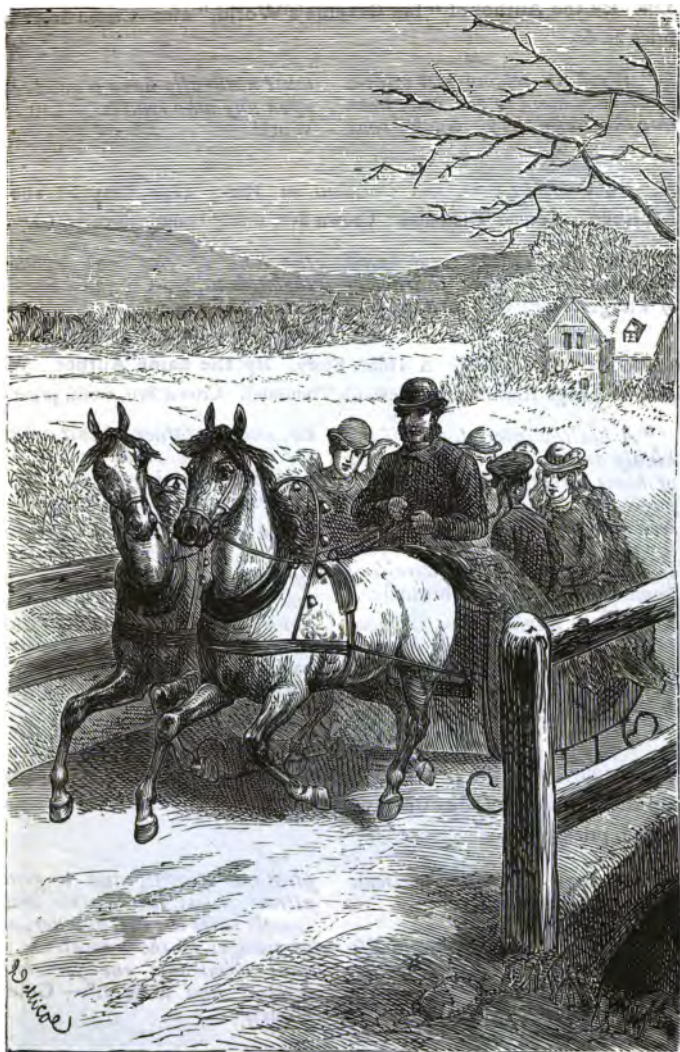
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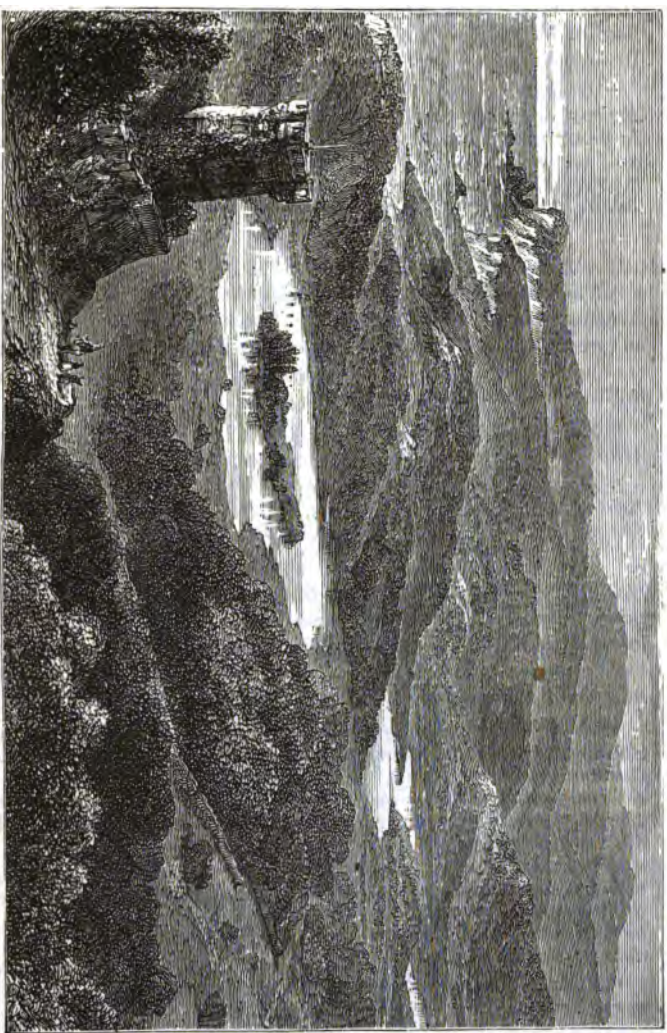
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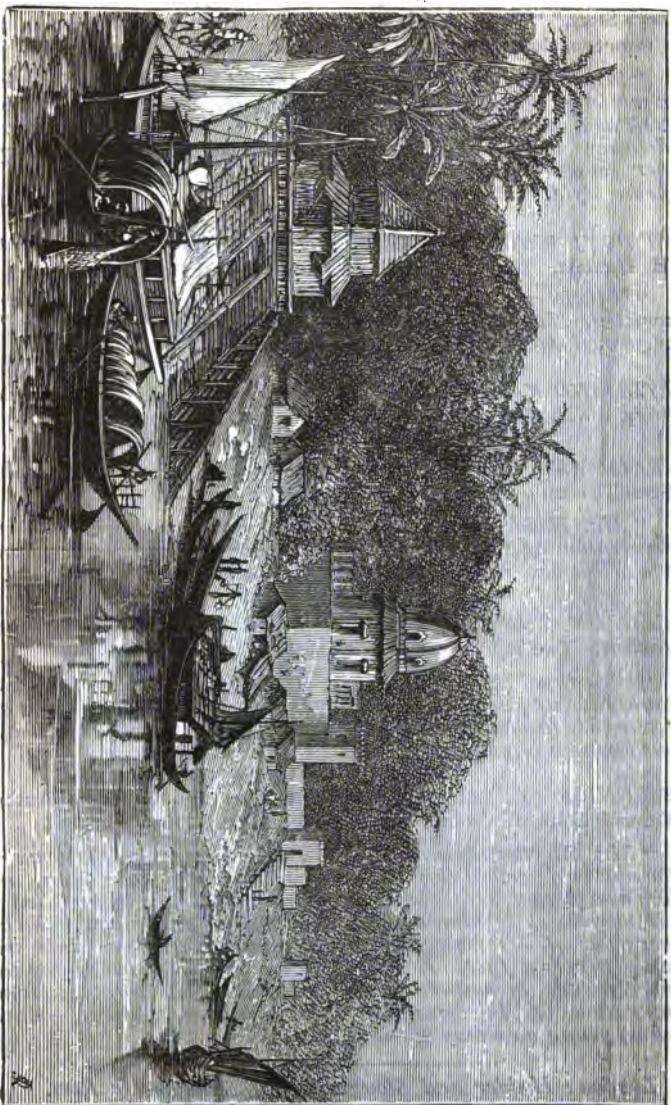
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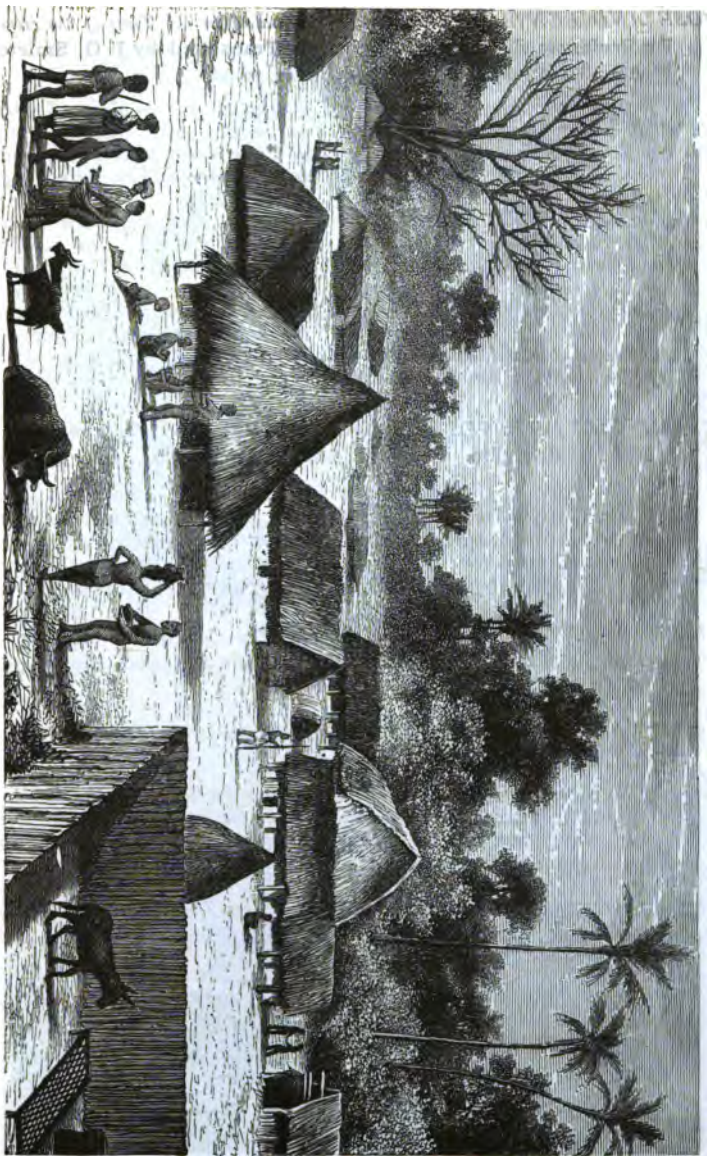
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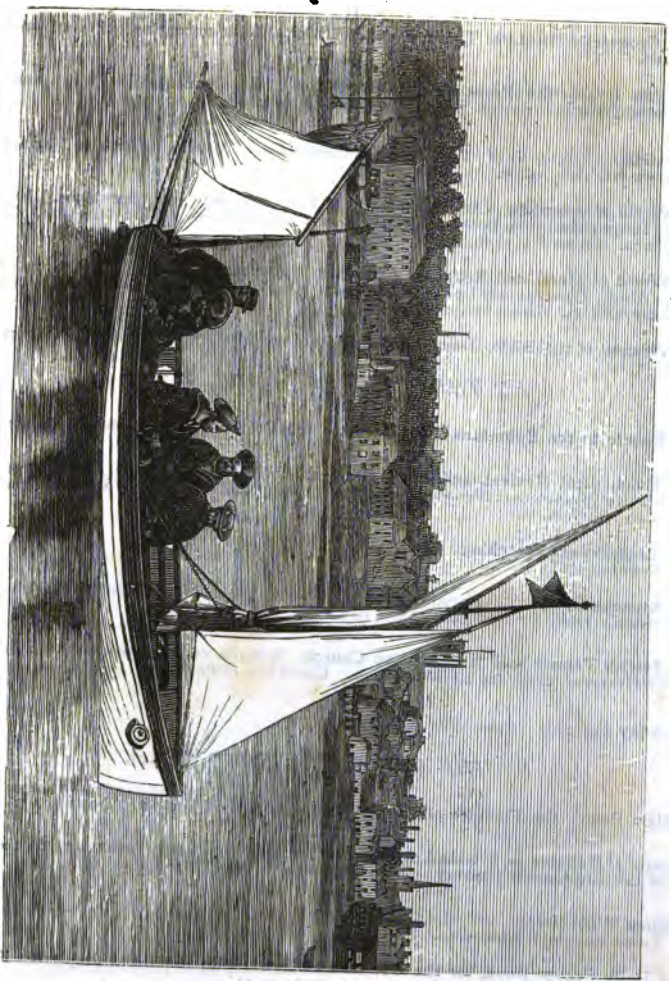
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